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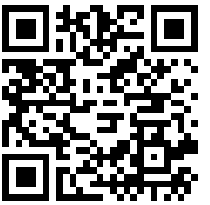
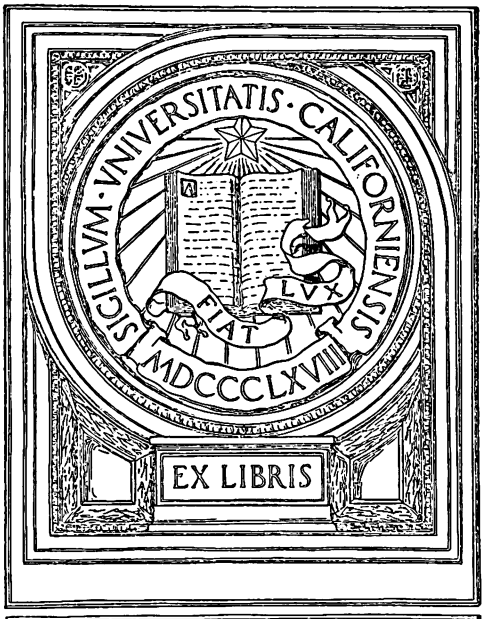


OPEN HOUSE IN FLANDERS

BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE

Château de la Motte au Bois

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



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OPEN HOUSE IN FLANDERS 1914-1918

CHÂTEAU DE LA MOTTE AU BOIS

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THE BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE

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[illegible] IN FLANDERS [illegible]

[illegible]

By BARONESS [illegible]

[illegible]

TRANSLATED [illegible]

[illegible]

WITH AN [illegible]

By FIELD-MARSHAL [illegible]

[illegible]

FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
NEW YORK MCMXXX

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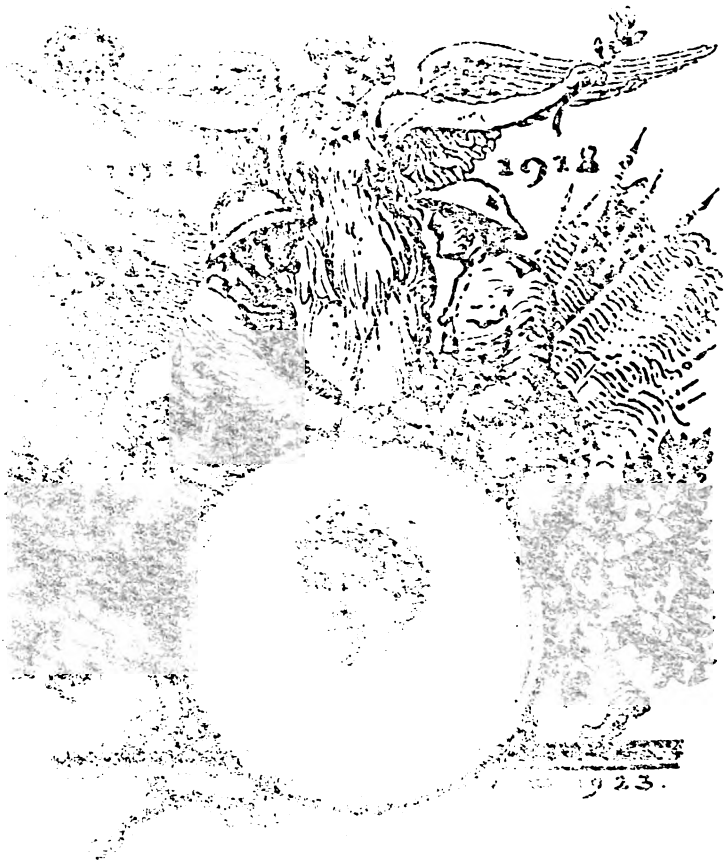

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OPEN HOUSE IN FLANDERS 1914–1918

CHÂTEAU DE LA MOTTE AU BOIS

By BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE
C.B.E., CHEVALIER DE LA LÉGION D'HONNEUR

TRANSLATED FROM THE UNPUBLISHED FRENCH

By MÉLANIE LIND

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By FIELD-MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT ALLENBY
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., ETC.

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INTRODUCTION

THE Baronne Ernest de La Grange was closely associated with the British Army during the whole period of the Great War.

Her historical château was ever open—a centre of hospitality—and I am one of many who remember it with gratitude as our Home.

I am proud of the fact that I was the earliest British guest of the gracious lady who became so well known as the "Mother of the British Army." The manner of our meeting, in October, 1914, is told in these pages, and the acquaintance begun in those days of danger and anxiety has resulted in a true and lasting friendship.

Never has there been a finer gesture than that of the Baronne Ernest de La Grange in the early days of the war, when, though urged to flight, she stood at her post —Châtelaine of La Motte au Bois—regardless of the advancing enemy, whose cavalry were sweeping through the surrounding Forest of Nieppe. Her example of intrepidity calmed the people of the village, quieted their fears, and restrained them from compromising their safety by panic action.

Throughout the war the château was her fortress and her home. Only, in 1918, when it came under shell fire at close range, suffering heavy damage, could she be persuaded to leave it; but she came back at the first opportunity.

The proud mother of a brave son, she gave him to France. The young Baron served with distinction, narrowly escaping death on many occasions, and returned to greet his mother in the hour of glorious victory.

The book which the Baronne has given to us is a human document, a stirring record of the daily life, the work, the anxieties, hopes, and joys of a noble Daughter of France. It is, moreover, a faithful history of the war,

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compiled by one who was in a position to see and know, one who combines the faculty of exact observation and the art of vivid narrative with a lively sense of humour and a graceful literary style.

These reminiscences will delight all who read them; while to countless friends of the author, in Great Britain and British Dominions, they will bring back grateful memories of La Motte au Bois, whose noble châtelaine won the enduring admiration and affection of us all.

ALLENBY,
Field-Marshal.

24, WETHERBY GARDENS,
LONDON, S.W.
12th June, 1929.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

On the 8th August, 1928, I was on the ramparts of the Menin Gate. A great concourse of pilgrims—60,000 Allies, 18,000 of them being British—were listening to the words of Dr. Lang, Archbishop of York, recalling the glorious and terrible memories that must for ever be associated with the old walls of Ypres. The many-coloured flags of the different branches of the British Legion floated proudly in the wind, as if defying those who would destroy the *Entente Cordiale*.

It was whilst standing there, before that unforgettable sight, that I felt I had something to do. I would leave to those who come after a little history of what I myself had seen and heard in the Great War of 1914-1918, when Flanders was the scene of the most bitter and stubborn fighting on the part of the British against our common enemy.

I shall dedicate my "Notebook," containing diaries of the war, to the officers and men of the British Legion who knew me under the name of the "Mother of the British Army."

How shall I ever forget the honour paid me by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who, after the ceremony, invited me to share his improvised bench—formed by two stone slabs from the ruins of the Town Hall. Each one of us had been given a small cardboard-box containing a picnic lunch, and the Prince had the same as the other pilgrims. Was it not a charming gesture to invite a Frenchwoman to share his meal which was eaten on Belgian territory? Is not this symbolic of the *Entente Cordiale* existing between the three countries? The Prince mingled amongst those who mourned their dead, even as during the war he had mixed with the combatants. Once again he made himself popular by his kindness and sympathy, which were so obviously sincere.

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10*th August*, 1928.

Today, in the library of the Château de la Motte au Bois, surrounded by my children and grandchildren, I live again those terrible hours when all day long the cannon roared around us. I remember the serenity and calm of my British guests, even in the most critical moments. They were equally ready to serve—for the common cause—under the Union Jack or the Tricolour, as occasion demanded.

Never did I doubt our ultimate victory! Not even when the crosses were multiplying round us.

They were, for me, symbols of the great final triumph.

BARONNE DE LA GRANGE.

September, 1929.

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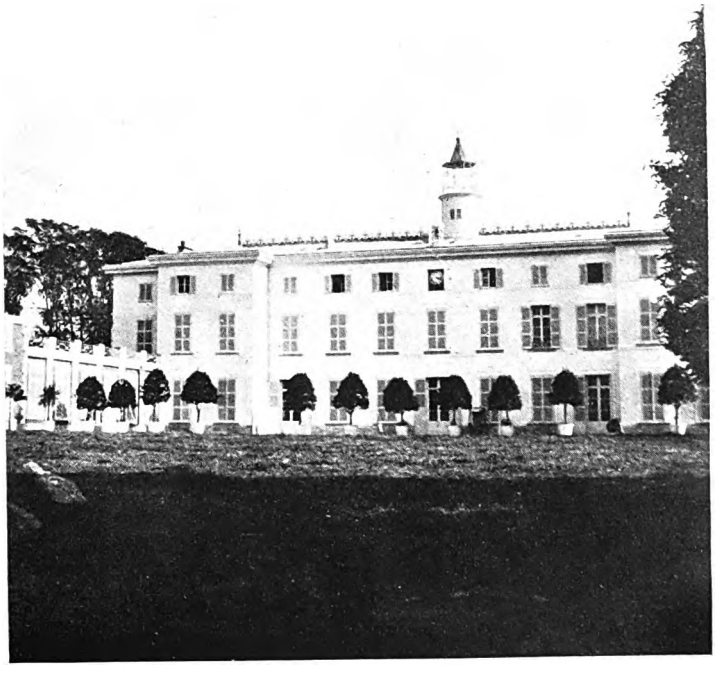

CHATEAU DE LA MOTTE AU BOIS, 1914

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LA MOTTE AU BOIS

THE Château of La Motte au Bois (the Mound in the Wood) is an old stronghold, dating its foundation from about A.D. 1066. It has seen much history, situated as it is in the "Cockpit of Europe."

Built not far from a main road, it has the canal almost like a moat on two sides, and long views over the flat, rich, Flemish land on every side, with the solitary Mt. Cassel rising from the plain to the north of the house. Near the stable yard is one bridge—our short cut to the village—and by the main entrance is another, the village and the château being on opposite sides of the canal, though only a few yards apart.

Today the old forest consists of many acres of scrubby bushes and young trees; most of those left standing after 1918 were diseased and unreliable as timber, so had to be cut down. It is now a sort of thick copse-like undergrowth, with here and there a lonely tree still left standing that breaks the monotony a little. The timber is grown largely for use as pit props in the neighbouring mines.

The Germans had a curious dread of the old forest, always expecting to be summarily hanged if taken prisoner near big trees. But they often made use of the little half-hidden clearings alongside the roads that run in every direction to conceal their machine-guns, in the hope of ambushing Allied troops as they passed.

The canal is very pretty in any but the dreariest weather, with trees on one bank, and reeds, tall grasses, and wild flowers, such as cowslips, forget-me-nots, and willow herb, growing thickly on both sides, while the slow passing of the long black barges seem hardly to disturb the patches of densely growing water-weeds and little yellow lilies that float on the still surface.

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In fact, it would be difficult to find a scene of greater rural peace and silence—especially on a hot summer day, when even nature seems to drowse.

And it was on this land of contentment and tranquillity that there fell the shock of war.

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1914

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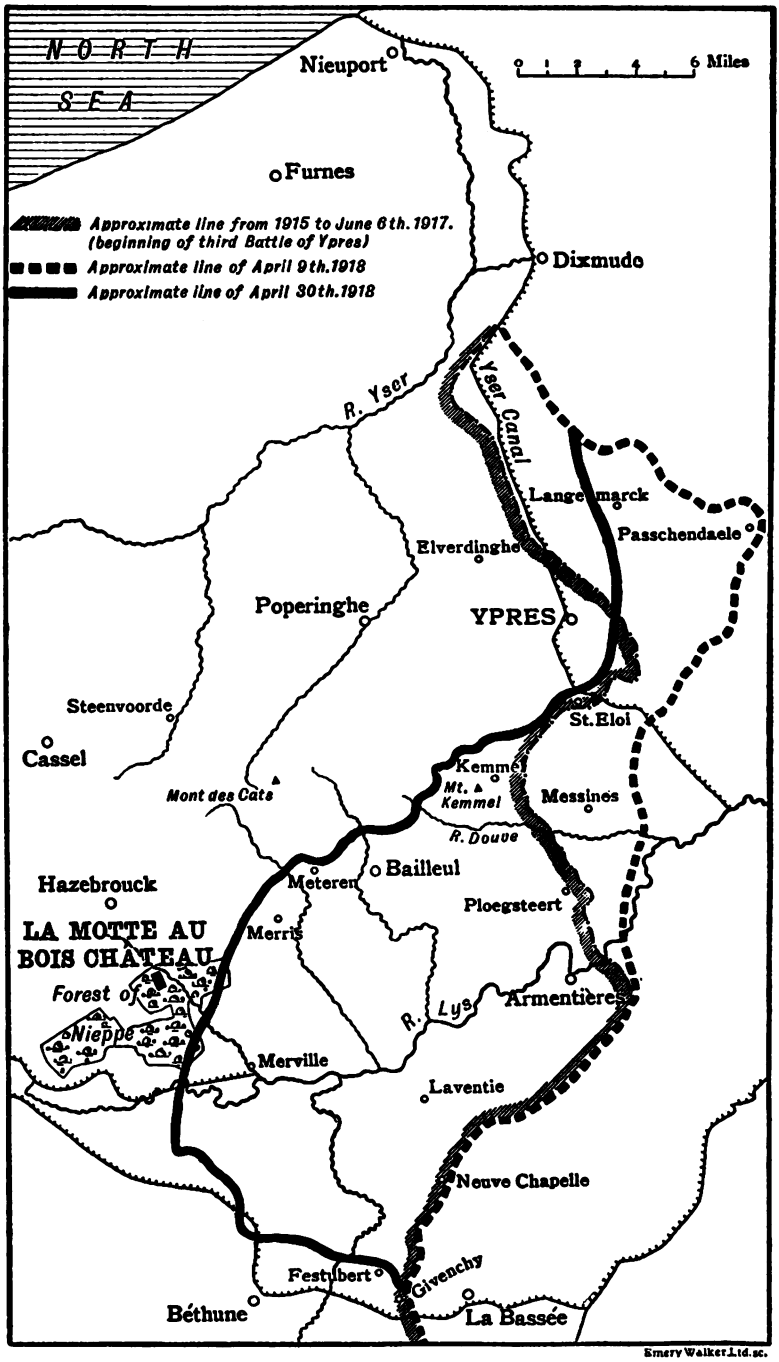

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JULY, 1914

Wednesday: 29*th.*

There is great anxiety in Paris today. A general uneasiness prevails, although daily life goes on as usual with the dancing, the tea-parties, and the weddings!

The ordinary, light, frivolous comment is made on the state of affairs in the Balkans—the characteristic outward sign of the French who refuse to take trouble seriously until actually faced by hard facts.

Thursday: 30*th.*

Mobilization is inevitable and is practically confirmed.

Amaury[1] tells me that he will not wait till the last moment, to make sure of getting a better horse than any likely to be allotted to his regiment of the 4th Cuirassiers (Reserve).

He has asked me to go to Neuilly to see the stables of Count Henri Nodler, and to choose from amongst his hunters a suitable charger.

Friday: 31*st.*

To avoid losing precious time I went to the rue des Belles Feuilles and there found a little Englishman, acting as concierge, who was once a jockey. I took him with me to Neuilly so that he might help me in my choice. Amaury himself has arranged for the transport from Paris to Hazebrouck. He has got the last horse-box given to any civilian on the Ligne du Nord, everything having been requisitioned.

I arrived this evening at La Motte au Bois. It was difficult to get away. Heavy baggage was left behind, and I had to leave with nothing but hand luggage. Amaury is making all haste to get his kit together, and rejoins me here tonight. The mare we chose arrives at the same time.

[1] Baron de La Grange, my son.

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AUGUST, 1914

Saturday: 1*st.*

Today, at about 4 o'clock, I was going to the village when I saw the dreadful placards announcing mobilization for the 2nd August—tomorrow. With a heavy heart I came home to tell Amaury the fatal news. There is no doubt this means war, and France must have my only son—exposed to all the dangers that war means. He will not wait for mobilization, but leaves tonight for Cambrai, where his regiment, the 4th Cuirassiers, is quartered. I sit here, going back in memory to his babyhood and youth, remembering the care I took to protect him from every possible harm, moral and physical—foreseeing, and guarding him from all danger. I feel for a moment I cannot give him up. My soul revolts! But what is the good? Do I not know that he belongs first to his country and then to his mother? And is he not amongst those who must proudly set the example in France? He has just come back from a visit to Germany and the Tyrol. A few days later, and he would not have been able to cross the frontier. Knowing Amaury as I do, I can imagine what torture he would have suffered had he not been able to return in time to defend his country.

He has just asked me what I intend doing. To leave the place where he has bidden me good-bye will be impossible. I shall look for some duty to fulfil, if dangerous so much the better. I shall feel nearer him. Even if I see death around me and the destruction of my old home and all my memories!

Sunday: 2*nd.*

About 6 o'clock this evening Amaury had his orders to join up at once, at the depôt of the 4th Cuirassiers. . . .

All night we have been hard at work preparing for the departure. I barely had time to lie down for a few hours' rest, and even then I could not sleep, for I was tortured by cruel presentiments.

What will be the fate of my son on whom all my hopes for the future are centred? And what will be

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mine, and, above all, that of France? Will England come to our aid? How heavily would the help of this great Empire weigh down the scales in our favour!

Monday: 3rd.

Amaury has gone. Mounted, his shining helmet made him look a true warrior. I never saw him so calm or so handsome, although he was deeply affected. His kit was placed on the cart of one of our oldest farmers, Ferdinand Vangraefschepe. Riding in front of it, Amaury passed through the entrance gates of the park. The old people of the village were all there, with tears in their eyes. They had known and loved his father and grandfather, because they, too, were sons of the country. Then Amaury, whom we could no longer see through the mist of our tears, bent down from his tall charger, drew me to him, and kissed me. He spoke to the villagers, recommending me to their care and protection.

I shall never forget the dull sounds of the mare's hoofs on the road, and the grinding of the cart wheels as it jolted over the cobbles. For a long time I followed, seeming half-blinded, and barely able to walk, but trying not to lose sight of the mounted figure.

The sun still gilded the crest of the oaks in Kléber Wood, slightly veiled by the evening mist, and at last, at the turning by the little bridge near the forest, I lost sight of them, and sank down on a heap of stones. I had kept back my tears for the sake of my son, but now I gave way shamelessly to my despair.

I think the dawn would still have found me there had it not been for two gentle women who came softly, shadow-like, and taking me as one wounded, drew me, with a thousand sweet and respectful attentions, to my home. They were the little Sisters, the dear nuns of the Holy Heart of Mary who had come to serve our poor on the eve of that cruel day when I was left a widow, fifteen years ago.

Oh, the heartbreak of the deserted home! His empty room, in disorder at the hurried departure! I have been tidying up, putting away his everyday clothes. Now I can only think of the uncertainty of the future.

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Sebourg, too, our other family property, near Valenciennes, gives me some anxiety lest the Germans violate Belgian neutrality—although I can hardly think this probable. . . .

The papers are full of terrible news. The Tsar has signed the Ukase decreeing general mobilization, which will give Germany an excuse to declare a state of war. On the 21st she sent an ultimatum to Russia ordering her to cease her armaments, and saying that unless this is done, Germany herself will start mobilization. The answer was to have been given yesterday. Monsieur de Schoen has notified the French Government of this step, and asks what will be her attitude in the event of the refusal of Russia.

Our fate is hanging in the balance, and I ask myself in terror: How far are we beholden, by our treaties, to Russia?

Thursday: 6th.

A letter from Amaury, dated the 4th, in which he says:

"The political news is excellent. War having been declared by Germany the support of England is assured. Belgium will defend itself from Germany's attack, and Germany will be crushed. Everybody is calm, and goes quietly about his business. The men are well equipped and smart in new uniforms. I don't know what is happening the other side of the frontier, but here all is admirably arranged, and we can be full of confidence."

The papers confirm the excellent news about the British Fleet, which was reviewed by King George on the 18th July, and has remained in readiness ever since, thanks to the perspicacity of Winston Churchill. And on 3rd August, when Sir Edward Grey declared in the House of Commons that the British Fleet would protect the coasts of France and Great Britain, the fleet was prepared to leave Spithead. They put out on the 4th and for the last two days have mounted guard over our ports.

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Friday: 7th.

At Amaury's request I sent a telegram to Miss Sloane, who is at Divonne, telling her that he has rejoined his regiment at Cambrai. I wonder why Amaury is so interested in this girl? I met her once at lunch last spring, and I admit I found her charming.

Saturday: 8th.

Amaury wrote to me on the 5th from Cambrai, just a few lines, which I received on the 6th, asking me to take him a few things he needs. He tells me that he got to St. Omer late at night on the 3rd. He sent our farmer back from there, and with his mare, "Face," left that same night for Cambrai. There he learned of the departure of his regiment for Belgium, and he is charged with the organization of a squadron of reserves, which has to be ready to start by the 16th of this month.

Yesterday morning I left La Motte au Bois in Madame Degroote's car, which she was good enough to lend me, and, on my way, I stopped at Douai at the house of Madame Amidieu du Clos. There, too, I found desolation: the husband gone and anxiety in the house.

I was only able to be with Amaury a few hours. He seemed tired, poor boy! I wonder if he will be well when he starts the campaign. His spirits were excellent, but I thought him overdone physically. He asked me to write to his grandfather—who is eighty-nine—to beg him to join me at La Motte au Bois, where the danger seems to be less than at Sebourg, and where, too, life may be easier.

Amaury says that, after reading certain articles by General Maitrot, which appeared at the beginning of the year, he gained the impression that it is highly probable the Germans will cross Belgium—Maubeuge is directly on their route—in order to gain the valley of the Oise. Sebourg is, therefore, in greater danger than La Motte au Bois, which is a hundred kilometres north-west of the former.

It is now seven days since the mobilization. News coming through from Belgium and the Vosges is en-

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couraging our hopes for the success of our armies and the triumph of Right.

Liège is putting up a heroic resistance, and our troops are advancing towards Mulhouse.

How enthusiastically they must be pushing on to reconquer our Provinces annexed by Germany in 1871!

I foresee the most terrible conflict. Since the 5th August, Germany and Austria-Hungary have drawn against them Serbia, Belgium, France, Russia, and Great Britain. We have our allies, but how is it possible to make them co-operate on different theatres, and with the unity necessary to resist successfully such an imposing military force as Germany, ready for a long while past, for this infamous aggression?

Sunday: 9*th.*

King Albert has taken command of the Belgian Army, which will give immense confidence to this brave little people who stand between us and the enemy. I think the German star will pale somewhat in the eyes of certain Belgian friends of mine who have illusions as to the pacific intentions of Germany.

In a letter from Amaury, dated yesterday, he says he applauds the success of the Belgians, who covered themselves with glory at Liège, as in the old days did Massena at Genoa. For two days they have stopped the German advance, giving us time to mass our troops on the frontier. Amaury is awaiting anxiously the naval battle between the English and the Germans. It will be terrible, but glorious.

Hostilities appear to extend as far as the Austro-Hungarian frontiers. It is impossible to foresee the consequences of this first conflict raised by Germany. Will it end by including the whole of Europe, even to the most distant countries? In this international age the interests of nations are so closely interwoven.

Monday: 10*th.*

How anxiously one waits for the daily papers. They are full of war news. I read that General Léman, who

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is defending Liège, has had to face the most formidable attacks. The town fell on the 7th, but the forts are still holding out bravely. We must be everlastingly grateful to the General and his troops for holding up the invading forces these days, thus giving the Allies invaluable time.[1]

Tuesday: 11*th.*

I found this in the *Illustration.* It is what I see every day, and is a very true picture:

"Even before the mobilization order had gone out, men from all parts of the country were trekking towards the recruiting offices. From cockcrow onwards the roads were scattered with these brave men, whom the country welcomes with open arms. Bathed in the glory of the sunrise they passed, in groups and in pairs. And as they passed a cock crew loudly, and from the distance came faintly an answering crow. From every farm one heard them, like a triumphant concert.

"Is there not something providential in this chance, that placed these Gallic cocks along the paths of those who would defend France?"

Thursday: 18*th.*

Yesterday I re-entered La Motte au Bois, feeling a heavy sense of loneliness and responsibilities to come.

Saturday: 15*th.*

On Wednesday, Amaury, having asked me to go to Cambrai to say goodbye, I took the train to Lille, not liking to ask again for Madame Degroote's car. I got thus far without much difficulty, but great was my disappointment when, after having waited for two hours in the queue at the ticket office, and having just reached the coveted place, the little trap window was shut, and a strident voice announced to the waiting crowd that the compartments were already overcrowded and there was not enough rolling-stock to make up another train! When I saw the rush to the carriages, which were stormed by the mob, I realized it was useless, and even

[1] The forts of Liège actually held out until the 17th August.

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dangerous to attempt to board the train. After a moment's hesitation, I decided to try and find a car. By good luck I found a taxi in the station yard. When I expressed my astonishment that a driver still so young had not been obliged to join up, he showed me an artificial foot—replacing one he had lost in Morocco. He agreed to sleep at Cambrai and bring me back to Lille next day.

On the evening of the 18th I dined with Amaury and Captain Gabriel de St. Martin (of the Cavalry) at the terminus buffet, which is the Mess of all the officers awaiting orders for the front.

After dinner, returning from a stroll in the fresh air, what was my astonishment to find Emilie,[1] with an American friend, Mrs. W. A. Chanler! They left Paris at 7 o'clock in the morning, and reached Cambrai after some fifteen hours' travelling in a train full of civilians and mobilized men—having experienced on the way a series of tragi-comic adventures.

On Tuesday we separated; Emilie and her friend returning to Paris, I to Lille, and Amaury being left to his destiny. Going through Douai, I stopped again at the house of Madame Amidieu du Clos, and I was told she was at the Red Cross Canteen with her mother, Madame Finet. There, indeed, I found them, in their nurses' uniforms, looking after all the mobilized men passing through the town on their way to join their regiments.

It is a wonderful sight to see on all the roads the men in their new uniforms marching to the Front and singing the "Marseillaise" at the full pitch of their lungs. There are fine Boulonnais horses, too, in new harness of stout, shining leather. The trains are all full of cheery, confident young soldiers—with garlands round their cannons already facing Germany as the trucks moved eastward! On some of the coaches yesterday was written in chalk, "To Berlin!"

All this brave and generous rush towards the enemy—that everyone thinks will be conquered in three months—gives the impression of a festival rather than the drama of real war.

[1] My daughter, Countess de Bondy.

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Monday: 17*th.*

Today the postman brought me a charming letter, dated the 14th, from Amaury, saying how pleased he was to see me.

He says:

"It is in moments such as these that one realizes more than ever the depth of one's affection for those nearest the heart, and one forgets the mere acquaintances and doubtful friends who matter so little.

"But it is unnecessary for you and me to exchange words and to try and express our feelings. Yesterday we avoided a useless display of emotion, and we were right. Our hopes, our fears, we guessed them. It is more courageous not to speak of them.

"The intimacy of our life together makes it possible for me to face the most painful eventuality with the certitude that never for one moment will you have doubted the love I have always had for you. Circumstances have brought us closer together than is usual with mother and son. I have felt the greatness of your love for me, and I have appreciated the absolute confidence that you have always shown me. No one knows what the future has in store, but whichever of us survives, the other will know that he has shared one of the rarest, deepest, and most complete affections with the one whom God has recalled the first.

"I feel that I must say all this to you once, before leaving Cambrai, fearing that no letter can reach you at present."

In the same envelope he encloses a photograph, the first I have seen of him in uniform. I noticed again the lines of fatigue that struck me so much the last time I saw him. And it is only the beginning of his trial.

Thursday: 20*th.*

Felix[1] writes to tell me that he has been appointed Chief of Staff of the 8th Corps at Bourges. He hopes soon to have a more active job at the Front, but I doubt whether, at his age, he will get it. The authorities want

[1] Marquis de Chaumont-Quitry, my eldest brother.

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to rejuvenate the units, and reserve office billets for those soldiers, like Felix, who fought in the war of 1870.

Friday: 21*st.*

Amaury sends me a newspaper, from which I learn of the death of the Pope, Pius X. His death at such a moment, is it an omen? Was such an august victim needed to save our armies from sacrificing still further men? Already so many heroes have fallen on the immense field of battle. With his last breath those who surrounded the Holy Father heard him murmur in his agony a wish for the end of war and the re-establishment of peace. These last words, these last thoughts of the dying Father of the faithful, may they not arouse the pity of God? Amongst the enemy there are innumerable Catholics, and this wish for peace, pronounced under such impressive circumstances, may have some influence on the terrible times we are going through.

I wrote today to Amaury and told him that we mothers are keeping in touch with each other—that we are all *pauvres mamans*, whatever our station in life, peasant, or bourgeois, or aristocracy. All alike are uncomplaining and strong; proud mothers of fighting sons who do their duty like the brave Frenchmen that they are.

Sunday: 23*rd.*

Anniversary of Ernest's[1] death. I am haunted by sinister premonitions—the same I felt on that the most tragic day of my life. Left a widow at the age of thirty-five, I had to shoulder heavy responsibilities and to suffer the most terrible loneliness.

Monday: 24*th.*

A post-card from Amaury, with a Belgian stamp, reached me today with these three words: "Mille tendresses respectueuses." No doubt he left Cambrai to go north, which means that he is drawing near the fighting line. My anxiety is terrible.

[1] My husband, Baron Ernest de La Grange. Died the 23rd August, 1899, at La Motte au Bois.

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Tuesday: 25th.

The days pass slowly, oppressively. The silence of all those dear to me is heartbreaking. This inaction is unsupportable; I envy those working hard in the fields, cutting and reaping the harvest. I go to the village with words of encouragement. But what little courage have I myself! I cannot sleep; the nights are interminable. And when the church bell rings I have the impression of a death knell.

Sunday: 30th.

Always the same silence; I have heard nothing from anyone since the 18th. Rukebuche, the postman, comes every day from force of habit, but without letters. His stick, instead of helping him to walk, is strung with parcels of provisions for the villagers. He says that there are soldiers in Hazebrouck one day, and none the next. What does all this movement of troops mean? What is sure is that the Germans are in Belgium. And Amaury is there, too. It is probably because he is fighting that he does not write to me. God protect my son and country!

The Germans are at Armentières, and they will be here soon, I fear. The country is undefended, and I hope they will not make attacks on our people. The moment anyone offers resistance it is said their reprisals are terrible.

SEPTEMBER, 1914

Tuesday: 1st.

There is a rumour that Louvain has been destroyed. What a crime against Civilization, Art, and Science!

If this be a result of German "Kultur" one would rather be a Red Indian!

Tuesday: 8th.

Midnight. I am sitting alone at my window, listening to the sounds of French and Belgian locomotives, which have been retreating for hours to the south. I

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have the impression of a wild stampede and pursuit, easily distinguishing the difference between the shrill whistle of our engines and the more strident note of the Brabançonnes.

The locomotives at Hazebrouck are remaining under full steam day and night, their drivers and firemen standing by, ready to leap on board at the slightest alarm.

Panic reigns in the municipal offices, and also amongst ordinary citizens.

The people in the post-offices have been sent to Rouen or Havre, and telephones and telegraphs have been destroyed.

Every day the news from Lille gets more alarming. There is talk now of a German column of 2,500 men. Two days ago they seized the railway station, and many of the railway employés were caught like rats in a trap, and sent off to Germany. Several of the engineers, even, have met with this fate.

I feel worried before the perpetual threat of the German cavalry in our district; it is disquieting to see the country here so defenceless. Since the attempted German skirmish against Hazebrouck I have not seen any of the fatherly old Territorials who were then watching along our roads.

For reasons of prudence the authorities have posted up in every village the order that all arms in the possession of civilians must be taken to the Town Hall. It is said that on several occasions civilians, desiring to defend themselves, have been the cause of massacres of many of the inhabitants of a village or town, and that a single shot fired from a window has led to the most frightful catastrophes.

But it has also been proved that on more than one occasion the Germans themselves have fired that shot, as an excuse for incendiarism and pillage.

Feeling it is my duty to set the example, I have had all the arms in the château collected together—from the latest Purdeys to the old match-locks, and the trophies which decorated the walls: Arab guns, sabres from Damascus, and yatagans. All this arsenal, cata-

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logued by the old gardener, was piled up in two big cases, which in turn were loaded on to a farmer's cart. I had sent word to the village that everyone must bring me their fire-arms, ticketed or not with the owner's name, and all have been sent together to Morbecque.

I thought it wise to keep by me one little Browning—not for use against the Germans, but in case that, in the absence of all police, I might have to protect myself against any possible attack. This revolver I have hidden behind some hangings.

Someone came and told me that there was a man in the village—a burly fellow, afraid of nothing—who had refused to give up his rifle, saying that his son had been killed by the Germans in an ambush and that he was keeping his gun to shoot the first German who entered the place.

It is simply asking for reprisals, and would certainly mean the burning down of the village. I had to decide quickly what to do. I got my little Browning, put it in my pocket, and sent for the man. Standing opposite him, I begged him to give up the rifle. He refused. I drew the revolver from my pocket and told him that, so surely as he fired a shot against the Uhlans, I would blow his brains out! Half an hour later I had the rifle.

I doubt very much whether all the poachers have delivered up their arms; but they get too many rabbits and pheasants, and will take good care to keep their guns for other game than Germans!

Today I had a visit from an Englishwoman, Miss Johnston, who took advantage of one of the last trains running on the Dunkirk line. She is very devoted to me, having known me a long time, since she gave lessons to my children in their youth. She brought me the news that a strong force of British troops has arrived at Dunkirk. These troops have been placed at the disposal of General Bidon, Governor of the town, for coastal defence.

No sooner had Miss Johnston gone than it occurred to me to write to General Bidon. I have composed the following letter. But how to send it I do not know.

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DEAR GENERAL,

You will forgive me in my quality of civilian, expressing my fears and astonishment at seeing our rich Flanders province completely without troops since the 8th Territorials left us. Every time I see the distracted flight of masses of the population coming from the direction of Armentières I wonder if it might not be possible for you to send us some sort of help. The Uhlans are terrorizing the district. They are beginning to filter into the Forest of Nieppe. I know there is a large number of English, landing at Dunkirk, and I ask myself if they could not come to stop the enemy's advance in this direction.

My château is an old stronghold. I am more than willing to put it at the entire disposal of the National Defence—even at the risk of suffering all the consequences of such an act in time of war. I may add that there is a watch tower at the château from which a fine view is obtained of the whole country as far as Cassel and Dunkirk.

This letter I signed, and a compromising enough document it is should it fall into German hands!

Friday: 11*th.*

An official wire, through the Mayor, from my brother[1] saying his son, Renauld, was wounded on 29th August, near Roy. He was taken to the hospital at Montdidier for the first dressing, and then moved to Paris. It looks as though they were not sure of the safety of these northern towns if they transport the wounded so far.

Saturday: 12*th.*

One of those unfortunate Territorials who was taken prisoner by the Germans, but managed to escape during some village skirmish, arrived here after long days and nights in the forest and begged me to give him some civilian clothes. In this way I have had to get rid of three or four uniforms by dropping them into our lake. At first I hid them in a garret, but, thinking this too dangerous, I preferred to confide such damning evidence to the carp and pike!

[1] Count de Chaumont-Quitry, my second brother.

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"This man might act as messenger for me," I thought. "He *may* betray me, of course." However, I appealed to his patriotism—not knowing, as a matter of fact, whether he had any. After slipping my letter into his sock I gave him a 50 franc note, begged him to be prudent, insisted that he must give the letter into General Bidon's own hands, and wished him luck!

M. Descamps, a friend of Amaury's, came over by bicycle from Lille to bring me a letter from him dated the 23rd August, the anniversary of his father's death. Even in the heat of battle he remembered, and, overcoming all difficulties, managed to find a way of telling me that his thoughts were with me on this sad occasion.

Monday: 14*th.*

This morning, at about 9 o'clock, an aeroplane flew very low over the château, so low that we could see the man in it. It was not a French 'plane. Could it be a German one, come to teach me to mind my own business?

A few days ago, feeling horribly solitary in my big house, I took Sister St. Bernardin, the youngest of our little community, to live with me. They are bringing news of such infamous doings on the part of the enemy against women that I chose the one of the Sisters most likely to be exposed to danger in this way. I confided my fears to her on the subject of the aeroplane, and, to see the colours of the 'plane better, I went out, my little dog "Mino," a German basset hound, following me. (Such is the irony of things!) At that very moment two armoured cars stopped in the courtyard. My first impression was that they were Germans, and my heart stood still.

But the officer who advanced gave me a military salute, and asked me if I knew English. He showed me my letter to General Bidon as his credential, and asked if I would get into the car to show them where the aeroplane could make a landing. The officer's name was Commander Samson. Albert de Moras,[1] who happened

[1] Count Albert de Moras, my neighbour, living at Hazebrouck.

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to arrive at the moment from Hazebrouck to find out how I was getting on, came with me in the first armoured car.

Two men with loaded rifles got up on the sides of the car, their feet on the seat, ready to fire if necessary. It was a wonderful thing to feel I had a part in the great struggle, and was about to share the risks of war, if only for a few moments.

Arriving at Morbecque Albert de Moras showed us the Castelmerch, a big meadow, sloping down from the road, and—how queerly history repeats itself—the very spot where, one hundred years ago, the Russians had camped.

It really seems as though certain lands are consecrated to armies. It may be glorious, but it is perhaps not comfortable, to belong to a country thus destined for a battlefield!

Commander Samson showed me what signals I had to make to the aeroplane to enable it to land safely, and I did my best to gesticulate properly.

He then asked me if I would help him with the billeting of troops and parking of cars which they are bringing to the villages near. As most of the civil authorities have fled, with the rest of the population, I felt obliged to do my best to replace them, and gave Commander Samson all the aid I could. I was busy about my task when, in a cloud of dust, we saw a car coming from the direction of Hazebrouck. Commander Samson asked me to hide behind the car, as the Germans often arrived like that and "peppered" everyone as they went by. Often, indeed, they treacherously used the sign of the Red Cross as a protection for themselves. My curiosity, however, was too great, and I risked my head sufficiently to see the face of the Sous-Préfet of Hazebrouck. He congratulated me on what he called my activity and patriotism. After having brought me back to the château, Commander Samson accepted an improvised lunch, and we were at table when other armoured cars rumbled into the courtyard. They had come as supports to the two first, at whose non-return anxiety had reigned at Dunkirk. We had a real banquet with the new arrivals!

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In spite of the gravity of the times, British humour showed itself. Commander Samson suddenly accused me, in stern tones, of harbouring a spy! I demanded the name. When we passed in review my scanty staff and the little Sister, he solemnly denounced "Mino" —native of the Black Forest!

The festival meal—maccaroni, tongue and jam—concluded, a bottle of old Burgundy was emptied to the toast of the *Entente Cordiale*. Before going, the officers begged me to leave La Motte, insisting on the fact that in the event of the Uhlans arriving it might be a serious matter for me, being already too deeply compromised to expect much mercy.

But, with the help of God, I am glad to say I never thought of leaving. My duty is to remain in the midst of a population which has entire confidence in me, and I am sure that, even though I may have moments of terrible anxiety, I shall not regret my decision.

Before my guests left I called the officers' attention to the extreme urgency of occupying Mt. Cassel. We know from the refugees that the German artillery is moving; and from afar I showed my English friends the importance of this strategic point. From it one can overlook the whole country.

I feared, when saying good-bye to Commander Samson, that it was already too late, both for the defence of the country and my own security, though he expressed his hope of a very early return.

He gave one piece of great news: the English are complete masters of the Channel, and they are transporting their soldiers with a perfection of organization that France should never forget. It is giving us time to concentrate troops at the threatened points and will make secure the liberty of the French ports.

Saturday: 19*th.*

I received a telegram from Emily Sloane telling me that my daughter and her children have gone to Bergerac, in the South of France, leaving Hardelot Plage, which is menaced by the advance guard of the Uhlans.

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Sunday: 20th.

The R.F.C. is at Morbecque, together with a company of Oxfordshire Hussars, commanded by Major J. Churchill; these troops are acting as escort to the naval air squadron, commanded by Commander Samson.

I went over and found the officers expecting me. On the very place I had pointed out, the aeroplane had landed, and in the courtyard of a small château, occupied by a farmer called Verreman, are hidden under giant elms a considerable number of armoured cars, destined to harry the vanguard of the Uhlans.

I met there the Reverend Father Cavroy, Jesuit of Lille, and chaplain to the Irish troops.

Friday: 25th.

A letter from Amaury dated 28th August. He tells me he has been on the march since the 16th, and that he fought all day on the 23rd. That was the day he sent me those tender words. How precious they are to me I cannot begin to estimate. He says that he is very fit, and that he is quite accustomed to neither eating nor sleeping. He adds that his mare behaved splendidly during the battle, which shows that the fighting must have been fierce.

Sunday: 27th.

The only beings who really like the war are the pheasants in the forest. Since all guns were confiscated there are no sportsmen and fewer poachers. The pheasants stroll peacefully on the lawn in front of the château. I leave the door open in the hope that one or two may walk into the house, and that, without a gun, we will have a good roast pheasant for dinner.

Wednesday: 30th.

Felix writes to tell me that Amaury was seen alive and well at Epernay, near Rheims, between the 4th and 5th of this month. Amaury was doubtless present at the burning of the cathedral. How his sensibility, artistic and French, must have suffered!

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Good news also from Sebourg, dated the 11th. My father-in-law survived the terrible emotions of the invasion of the 23rd, 24th, and 25th August.

OCTOBER, 1914

Saturday: 3rd.

It has been a lovely afternoon, and I went into Morbecque, where I had not been for several days, only to find everyone gone. This very morning it seems that aeroplanes and armoured cars alike departed to other villages.

I have now the most horrible sensation of loneliness, of being abandoned. Our defence seems definitely gone; everything looks uncertain. We really are in the sacrificed zone now. We can hear the continuous crackling sound of the machine-guns in the direction of Hazebrouck and Sec Bois. I dare not go far from home for fear of having my retreat cut off.

Sunday: 4th.

Amaury writes and complains that he has no news of me, that my letters do not reach him.

He says: "One develops a philosophic outlook when in hourly danger of death. One has a clear sensation of one's helplessness, and the knowledge that all is a matter of chance and of luck. To a Christian both are called Providence. When one has realized this one has great confidence in the future. When all is over we will have a grand family gathering at La Motte au Bois. After a campaign one is thankful for everything—a good bed every night, a fire, a book, a dish of *haricots verts*, a pair of warm slippers when one comes in with wet feet—I choose haphazard from the thousand and one delights of *home*. I am wrong to jest, for really one gets accustomed to doing without these things—even *haricots verts*. And you cannot imagine the comfort of a haystack! One has been my abode for five days, and I left it with as many regrets

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as one has on leaving old and favourite lodgings. (See Victor Hugo.)"

Tuesday: 6th.

A letter from Amaury, dated the 2nd, in which he says that at last he has received a batch of my letters, the latest written on the 17th September.

Wednesday: 7th.

Again today a letter from Amaury. He is now comfortably installed after a period of hardship. His platoon, he says, is splendid, and the men get on well together and are devoted to him. One day last month he and fifteen of them were advancing in the rain over slippery vineyards when the enemy suddenly opened fire. Amaury's horse took fright and slipped down with him, pinning him to the ground. All his men jumped from their mounts and helped him up, inspected the girths, and assisted him to remount, without a single one thinking of trying to save himself. And all this under heavy machine-gun fire. Amaury was very touched by this proof of their devotion. "But I must add," he says, "that I take a great deal of trouble for them, chiefly seeing that they have good food—a very sensitive point! They are brave men from the North who know and like me. Amongst them are some with wonderful courage, who would follow gaily, however dangerous the way. Ah, my poor mother, what evil days we are going through, and how laboriously a page of history is being written!"

Thursday: 8th.

Last night, at 10 o'clock, Sister St. Bernardin and I, who take it in turn to sleep a few hours on a mattress on the floor downstairs, were making our nightly preparations as usual, when we heard the sound of horses entering the courtyard. We thought it was the Uhlans! I rushed to open the door, for we had been told that the Germans break down any they find shut with the butt-end of their rifles. We were greeted by a "Bon soir" in no German voice. It was a tremendous relief!

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They were the officers of the 7th Cuirassiers of Lyon asking to be billeted at the château, and some of their men in the outbuildings. The remainder of the squadron have been quartered in the neighbouring farms and villages.

The commanding officer is Captain de Vauplane, who has under his orders Lieutenants St. Severin, St. Trivier, and de Lalande.

The weather is frightful. We could not leave the horses outside. Hastily arranging the orangery, we prepared a frugal meal for the officers. A glass of Burgundy was appreciated, and the sight of a good bed, too! These poor boys told us they had only slept on straw during the whole of the retreat and forced marches that they had just made, from the Aisne, to come to our help.

They told me of the Battle of the Marne, and gave me some idea of what Amaury must be going through —that is, if he is alive. Captain Vauplane tells me that he must have fought round about Namur and the marshes of St. Gond.

The officers asked to be awakened at 5 o'clock in the morning. I myself performed this rather cruel task—knocking till sleepy or indignant sighs warned me that the boys were really awake.

The bells were ringing for Mass at 7 o'clock, and I was just going to church, when on the bridge I was stopped by Colonel de Tavernost, who demanded rather roughly if the officers I had billeted were gone. On getting my reply in the negative he was angry, and as I tried to excuse my young guests, he remarked cuttingly: "Madame, in war life is not a bed of roses. Go and tell them to start at once!"

Friday: 9th.

Again last night, while I was still at dinner, troops arrived looking for quarters. This time it was the 30th Dragoons, under Commandant de Charant, accompanied by a charming young officer, Lieutenant de Loiray, from Lyon.

The Commandant de Charant is the true type of

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French officer who has never known another life than that of the professional soldier. In his face are to be seen the energy, the tenacity, and the contempt for danger to himself, mixed with the love and solicitude such a soldier has for his men. Tall, his thinness accentuated by privations, he conveys the impression of a real warrior of the Middle Ages. Were he wounded you feel he would face squarely up to Death.

Loiray told me the whole squadron has been galvanized by such a commanding officer, and when his thin figure is to be seen in the fight, it is always the rallying point and last stand for every man.

Sister St. Bernardin quickly got to work and laid two places. How glad our visitors were to see a table cloth and to feel the pleasant heat of a crackling fire—to taste a little the joys of the hearth after such a long time!

When the horses had been stabled in the orangery, Lieutenant de Loiray slept in the straw with his men, and the Commandant accepted a mattress in the smoking-room. He said it was too dangerous, in the event of an unexpected alarm, to go upstairs.

At dawn the marching order was given, and I watched the whole squadron ride away—disappearing in the white mist of the autumn morning. I had hardly time to heat two cups of coffee for my guests of a night before they were gone!

It has left a very painful impression on Sister St. Bernardin and myself. During the day we have been in the kitchen garden, and keeping under the shelter of the wall, got a little fresh air. On every side we can hear the sound of the 77 shells falling in the forest, and we are beginning to wonder if we are not already surrounded.

About three o'clock this afternoon I heard the wild galloping of a horse, and, rushing to a window, I saw young Loiray clatter into the courtyard. He was covered in mud, his horse sweating and white with foam. He seemed greatly upset, and implored me not to stay here. He fears the line will be broken, as,

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after having fought all the morning, he and his men have had orders to retreat.

He was trembling at the idea of abandoning me to the enemy, alone, and without protection. He assured me the road to St. Omer was still free. When I firmly refused to leave my post there were tears in his eyes, and he asked if he might kiss me. I felt as if it were my son again giving me his farewell kiss that day he left me with his heart so full, and I think that this boy, too, has a mother he dearly loves.

As I watched him ride away to join his platoon I had the horribly morbid thought that probably in a few hours we should have Germans quartered on us, perhaps men with hands dyed in the blood of our sons.

Nevertheless, I am glad to be running the same dangers as these children of France. After seeing Loiray off, the little Sister, who is of Parisian origin, and I, concocted all sorts of outrageous plans against the Germans, any one of which would certainly get us hanged!

Saturday: 10*th.*

The news is bad. The refugees are fleeing before the advance of the enemy. The Germans are terribly near, entrenched at the Sec Bois and Lucasse, and pushing their outposts into the Forest of Nieppe which surrounds the château.

Yesterday the Sisters had an exciting day, too. A French soldier jumped, without warning, over the wall, demanding civilian clothes. It certainly was a humorous idea to go to a Convent to ask for masculine attire. The Sisters were considering resorting to the village schoolmistress, who has recently married, when a man rode up on a bicycle, which the soldier promptly mounted and disappeared without waiting for anything more.

In the evening I carried some wine to the gunners of the 75's mounted at my gates. All the bridges across the canal, except ours of the château, have been destroyed. Returning, it was pitch dark in the

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park. Near the stables I saw a light in the shrubbery. It went out suddenly and three men leaped from the shadows. To my startled question: "Who goes there?" came the reassuring answer: "French."

They were three cuirassiers, sent to guard the bridge, and to ask me to show them by which path they could retreat in case of attack.

We are watching day and night the ceaseless stream across the bridge of all those unfortunate creatures evacuated from the surrounding country, who are flying towards Hazebrouck in order to reach St. Omer and the coast. It is the most heart-breaking sight and impossible to describe in words.

I think of a cart we saw today, laden with its pathetic cargo of women, old men, and children. The children hugged in their arms, one a cage of canaries, another a litter of kittens, a third a kid a few hours old. In an old red velvet easy-chair, with gilded nails, sat the paralyzed old grandmother. One saw that in the distraction and hurry, and necessity of leaving nearly everything behind, the poor souls had chosen the best chair—probably a wedding gift to the old couple.

A young woman sat with legs dangling, a baby in her arms, and by her something which sparkled in the sunlight—a round glass case, under which lay the wreath of orange blossom, the precious souvenir of the tie which bound her to the absent soldier to whom she is faithful—her husband, one of our honest Flemish farmers, who has gone off to fight.

Tied behind the cart, kicking and resisting, a young calf was dragged along. A mare followed with her foal. The grey-haired farmer, crouched on the shafts, was making superhuman efforts to hold the vehicle back as they went down the little slope of the park, and trying at the turn to prevent it mounting the grass. The stupid Flemish fashion of harnessing makes this human transport very difficult. The poor things never get very far without a spill into the ditch, or an encounter with military transports on the road, when these poor, worried creatures necessarily come off second best. There are gendarmes harrying them from

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the rear, and badly given or misunderstood orders hurry them from one town to another, or, worse still, the authorities, believing the danger over, send them home only to drive them forth again next day.

Now we are receiving them in crowds, letting them sleep on mattresses on the floor in the outbuildings, anywhere. Often they arrive shoeless, having walked twenty miles without rest.

Yesterday evening the Sister and I were making soup for some thirty of these tired and famished people, rich and poor. We use the great pot that was once used at the laundry for boiling linen! We gathered vegetables from wherever we could, and bought up the few loaves of bread to be had. At about eight o'clock already many of the exhausted wanderers were lying asleep, breathing heavily. Three little girls lay side by side on a mattress. One wore a cape, and from out its folds peeped the head of a very small kitten. The Sister and I both thought of "Petit Poucet" when seeing this living illustration of the famous fairy-tale.

And this sad flight goes on day after day. One never knows when it may be one's own turn. All we can do for those innocent sufferers of war we do, as we hope may be done for us, if we need it some day. This morning I was watching this sombre caravan going by, when I saw a car arrive with one place empty. The driver, seeing me at the window, begged me to accept it, saying he knew my family, and especially my relations in law. He was a grain merchant of La Gorgue Estaires. He became more and more urgent, and finally, at the end of his arguments, he bawled out: "Madame, come! Only three miles from here they have assaulted even a countess!" No hope, evidently, for a mere baroness!

Much annoyed at his insistence, I lost my temper and shouted back defiantly: "Well, so much the worse, they will assault me!"

I heard a crash behind me. It was the little Sister, who had collapsed into a chair in such fits of laughter that I was thunderstruck. Before my scandalized face

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she recovered herself enough to say: "With all due respect, madame, it doesn't seem to worry you much!" Oh! these Parisians! Even a nun, and at such a time, could not resist a little mockery! I turned back to the window to see the motorist still gasping. Firmly, and in such a way as to make further discussion impossible, I refused his offer finally.

Then I saw that my cook and my maid were in the courtyard. They were the last of my staff, and had already left me once, and returned. Both, obviously, had an eye on the empty seat. I called them up to my room, paid their wages, and wished them good luck. Since then the little Sister and I have done the cooking between us, getting a helping hand from the gardener's wife. He, in terror of being taken prisoner, has fled, and left her plunged in the deepest despondency.

The Reverend Father Andries came to see me. I shared my frugal meal with him—that is, we tried to eat, but appetite was wanting. About nine o'clock the sound of galloping horses made us leap to our feet. A heavy knocking at the door! Surely the Uhlans this time! I rushed out to save my door, and was greeted by a word so extremely French—a battlefield word used by one of Napoleon's generals—that I could have no further doubt. Instead of stiffening with disapproval and horror, the relief was so great that it was like balm to my heart.

There were four cuirassiers who stormed at me because my gate was open. What *is* one to do? All these orders and counter-orders, there is no understanding them. Then they said they were going to blow up my bridge, the one leading to the church and the village. Here I got extremely angry. What is the point in destroying the only bridge by which the refugees and the cavalry that we have seen passing for the last two days can cross? So I defied the cuirassiers and told them I *dared* their C.O. to blow up my half of the bridge. It is *mine*. He could blow up the village half if he liked. It was an idiotic remark, but apparently my ferocious

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energy had its effect, for the cuirassiers made no reply, remounted their horses, and rode away to return no more. The château bridge will remain there throughout the war, if I can prevent its destruction.

As I was trying to re-enter the house by the big door, I found it locked from the inside, and so went round by the kitchen. There I was seized by a fit of nervous laughter at the sight before me. Was it the Grotto of Lourdes, or the Courtyard of Miracles? There, in my kitchen, were installed all the halt, the maimed, and the blind of the village, surrounded by crutches and sticks. Grouped around the fire were a poor old creature, badly afflicted with St. Vitus' dance, a dropsical woman as round as a barrel, an old crone with shrivelled limbs, and a young idiot boy. This miserable little community, condemned by nature, evil-smelling, and lacking the attention of soap and water, ought to have made me cry. Perhaps that is why I laughed—to avoid tears.

I thought of the superhuman efforts the Sister and I would have to make to get these helpless people down to the cellar in case of bombardment. Already we have foreseen the possibility of this event, and have made quite a cosy installation in those good, solid cellars, constructed by Robert le Frizon somewhere about the year A.D. 1066. We have amused ourselves by arranging not only mattresses, but certain toilet necessities, and I flatter myself that our improvised sanitation in empty wine cellars is far from being banal!

It is seventeen days, and therefore seventeen nights, since the Sister and I have dared to undress, for fear of being surprised by the Uhlans.

Last night, after lying down on my mattress as usual, a sudden noise from the kitchen made me start up with a jump. I ran hastily into the room, and there, to the accompaniment of the steady snoring of the others, I saw that the noise came from the frantic tapping made by the victim of St. Vitus' dance, who was sleeping with his elbows on a table, and beating the call to

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arms. I laughed, and recovered my serenity, and was trying to get a little sleep when the crackling of machine-guns was heard. The Sister, the gardener's wife, and myself, a sad trio, then prayed for our men who were fighting.

Sunday: 11*th.*

This morning at dawn, running out with "Mino," I thought I saw a watching figure under the limes. It seemed dressed in grey, knapsack on back, a helmet on the head. It must be a spy, I thought, leaning against the trunk of one of the group of limes which form a graceful cluster under the house. I have kept the Reverend Father Andries with me in case we have to get our invalids down into the cellars, and I begged him to watch the man.

I went out with "Mino," then, and from some feeling, which was not pluck, called to her in German, hoping to soften the spy! As nothing moved, I approached, and saw, not without disgust, that my nerves had played me a trick. My "spy" was the huge knot of a big gnarled tree, and the point of the supposed helmet was a whetstone left there by one of the reapers.

And this reminds me that once, in my childhood, I shrieked for help, believing there was a thief under my bed. But it was only the old watch which my governess had hung at the head of the bed, and which had slipped down. I thought the ticking came from a watch in the pocket of a burglar! Another time I got a terrible fright from hearing the stealthy slipping of a silk petticoat from a chair to the floor. Anything or nothing will make the heart beat too fast when suffering, as we are now, from continual sleepless nights and overwrought nerves.

The enemy have reached Vieux Berquin, and our poor refugees seem not to know in which direction they should flee. Our curé keeps calm and prays incessantly. One goes to church counting the steps between it and our cellars. At my request the priest has suppressed singing and music, and they just ring once or

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twice to call us to holy offices. Every moment we expect a shell to burst over us.

The Sister and I go down to the cellars, where we see if everything is in order and comfortable—an ironical term, of course! Then we come up to the smoking-room, having cast an eye on our always frugal provisions. Last night "Mino" followed us, and we met her soon after—cunning little German beast—carrying triumphantly in her mouth our one and only chicken! It was prepared for roasting, and we were so looking forward to our little feast.

Last night we watched from behind the half-closed shutters of a second-floor window the coming and going of shadowy figures, stealthily gliding along under the hedges of the park. It was a brilliant moonlight night and the spies were busy. We could easily distinguish the vermin—civilians bought by the enemy, or persons sent here by them, listening, counting, and then conveying their information to the Uhlan vanguard, waiting in the forest, by their preconceived signals, whistles, or the imitated calls of the night birds. It makes us sick at heart, but we are powerless to warn our men who are passing incessantly, hour after hour, that they are being spied upon. There is no doubt that we are under constant observation ourselves. We hear incessantly the "tripping" sound of tired horses—one feels the poor brutes are exhausted—then the quick, curt order from platoon to platoon, and how we long to make a bivouac for all our dear cavalry that we know is near, proud and splendid in spite of the continual harassing it is receiving from the enemy, the sound of guns never ceasing, and when it was time to go to vespers we were wondering what was happening. I went to church and found that our curé had not abandoned his idea of the pilgrimage promised to Our Lady of Lourdes. The little grotto is about 1,200 yards from the village, on the edge of the forest. It was a lovely autumn day. Along the banks of the canal we went, a poor little procession—the priest, the sacristan, several old maids from the village, the Sisters, and myself. The cross, carried aloft, was reflected in the

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quiet waters of the canal, and beside it the red of the "soutanes" of the choirboys looked like splashes of blood.

But the "Ave Maria" came uneasily from oppressed hearts, and I fear the ears of the pilgrims were listening but absent-mindedly to prayers. Those other sounds of the not-so-far-away battle seemed to dominate all. I ventured to point out to the curé what a panic our little party would be thrown into, should cavalry be charging along the canal road. He agreed to cut short the prayers, and we ourselves did a pretty creditable charge back to the church.

Just as the priest was about to give the benediction, women began to seize their children and hurry them away, the words passing from mouth to mouth: "The Zurlands (Uhlans) are at the station!" I remained alone to receive the benediction, and once the holy office ended I went out to hear what was happening.

The facts were that some Uhlans had ridden up to the little tavern near the station, had sat down at the tables and studied their ordnance maps, while drinking beer and questioning the women of the tavern. I felt the best thing to do would be to go and meet them for a parley. But when I arrived at the station they were already mounted and riding away in the direction of Vieux Berquin.

This word Uhlan strikes terror into the hearts of our peasants, especially the old people who remember the war of 1870. Though very young myself—I was only eight years old—I still remember the stories I used to hear of pillage by the "regiments of Death," as they called themselves.

We hope our village, however, will be spared the happenings of Pradelles, where a few days ago they shot the curé. They had demanded the key of the belfry—he did not understand clearly, and was unable to explain why he could not give it up—the fact being that the sacristan, fleeing before their approach, had carried it off in his pocket. Pradelles is only about three miles from La Motte au Bois, and the inhabitants,

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knowing I speak German, came and begged me to go over and reason with the enemy. A few minutes later I heard it was already too late, and, fearing I might not be able to get back to where my duty lies, I judged it wiser not to go.

Today again, I was walking along the road to Vieux Berquin when I heard, very distinctly, the sound of wheels. I thought it was a machine-gun, and considered it imprudent to go any further. As I passed by the church a troop of British cavalry suddenly appeared from the direction of Merville, and a young officer dismounted and asked me if I knew in which direction the vanguard of the Uhlans had gone. He was in pursuit, but so far had not been able to find them, though he had been advised they were at La Motte au Bois. Some people from Preavin told us that eighteen or twenty Germans, gone back into the forest, had taken the station road, and my information being the same, my young officer begged me to show him the way myself. I accompanied him a short distance, and then, taking command of his men again, he rode away, and I came back. I had not even arrived before the ominous crackling of machine-guns warned me that the battle had already begun. And I had sent those friendly boys into it! It is an atrocious and agonizing thought to feel that a word may mean life or death—and one might have sent them the other way.

As night fell the little Sister and I, weeping, recited on our knees the prayers for the dying. I did warn the young officer that I believed there was a machine-gun near. He seemed incredulous, saying it was only cavalry, but alas! I was right, as it proved. All night we suffered an agony of doubt, and at dawn, feeling we *must* know what had happened, the Sister and I left the château and went towards the spot we believed to have been the scene of the fighting. There might be wounded. About half a mile or so from the village, right in the forest, near a bridge across the Bourre, we found the place. A horse lay dead. A little further we found on the blood-stained earth the cap of an English soldier. There was a deep stillness around,

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though in the distance the crackling of machine-guns and the boom of cannon could yet be heard.

The Uhlans at Preavin had questioned the woman Descamps as to what troops she had seen in the district, and this worthy tavern-keeper had, with considerable judgment, greatly exaggerated the number of allied squadrons that she had seen passing by.

During the afternoon Albert de Moras came on foot to see me. He said that Hazebrouck had been deserted by its inhabitants since the 6th, and that it is rumoured there is a large contingent of German troops at Ypres. A brigade of French artillery arrived at Hazebrouck on the 5th, but left on the 6th for the north, as the Uhlans were signalled as being at Flêtre and Meteren, and there had been a big fight between Caestre and Borre. There are rumours, he says, of fighting round Lens and Nœux, and that two bombs have been dropped from an aeroplane on the station and post-office of Hazebrouck. It is the first time I have heard of aeroplane raids.

Skirmishes at Pradelles occurred when French chasseurs à pied were passing, going from Haverskerke with fifty motor buses carrying soldiers and munitions. Albert de Moras tells me that all the able-bodied men have fled towards St. Omer to escape the Germans.

A curious fact has now become known. In the Hazebrouck skirmish, when thirty Germans coming from Bailleul entered the station by train, it was seen that the train was driven by a spy, the former bookkeeper of a big draper in the town—a man who had been in the same employ for years and who knew every detail of the railway station! He had been on excellent terms with his employer, and with everyone in the town.

On Friday, the 9th—I am still quoting Albert de Moras—there were shots exchanged at Borre and at the gates of Hazebrouck; on the 10th the silence of Death reigned over the town; the shops were shut and the white flag was run up over the Town Hall!

At 9 o'clock in the morning the victims of the station

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fight were buried—two employés of the Compagnie du Nord, two soldiers and two children.

There has been fighting at Estaires, Bailleul, Armentières, and even up to the gates of Merville.

Monday: 12*th.*

Late last night an English officer arrived, announcing himself as "Camp Commandant" of the English Cavalry Corps, and asked if I could billet the staff here. He said General Allenby was coming, and asked to see bedrooms and kitchens. Already huge motor lorries were in the courtyard, and French cooks were examining the cooking stove.

My invalids went back to their homes reassured by the arrival of the British cavalry, and the poor victim of St. Vitus' dance tried to salute without ever managing to get his hand as far as his cap!

The cars in the yard were unloaded of such an enormous quantity of foodstuff that I asked myself what sort of a Gargantua that General could be? It was late when the headlights of a Rolls-Royce threw their dazzling glare across our old walls. Several other cars followed it, and soon one could hear, as well, horses snorting under the trees in the park. The place became all at once as busy and animated as a hive. There was a coming and going of orderlies bearing canteens and officers' rugs, and, in spite of my patriotic pleasure at the thought of lodging Allies instead of Germans, I gave one despairing thought to my parquet floors. These are as likely to be damaged by the military boots of friendly as of enemy soldier men! I dared not express my housekeeperly feelings; but I did not suffer the less.

The Rolls-Royce made a half turn and the aide-de-camp jumped down lightly. I admired this suppleness of body, produced by the practice of athletic games, and the cut of the uniform, which, if a man is not already a gentleman, gives the appearance and bearing of one. Then the door of the car opened, and General Allenby's tall figure was silhouetted for an instant in the doorway of the hall.

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After the formal introduction I made him come into the drawing-room. He is the first great "Chief" I have seen, and I felt like someone whose mother is very ill, and who has suddenly before her the head physician. We all feel our native land is our mother, but in all great catastrophes the first instinct is that of self-preservation.

My first question was: "Shall we have the Germans here?" Then I thought, and asked, about the rest of France.

My drawing-rooms are still furnished; the big Bechstein is in the corner, but we have hidden four of the best pictures in a secret place. They are the Henri IV., by Porbus; the "Liseuse," attributed to the Italian school; the "Virgin with the Grapes," by Mignard; and the portrait of my grandmother, the Countess Tascher de la Pagerie, attributed to Ducis.

General Allenby spread out his maps and asked me for all possible information concerning the country I know so well—having ridden, driven, and walked over it all. I even fetched my own motoring maps and pointed out certain details, which he noted. He told me the French cavalry, commanded by General Conneau, is co-operating with him. It was far on in the night when General Allenby left me and went to get a little rest.

As I was preparing to do the same, I said to Sister St. Bernardin that I have the impression that this eagle-eyed man, who gives his orders so clearly and precisely, and seems as much feared as respected by his entourage, will put a barrier between us and the Germans.

Before being able to retire, I had all the duties of the mistress of a household, surprised by the arrival of unexpected guests. I had to get in wood and coal and crockery. I have had the château pretty full before sometimes with family gatherings, but never have I been reduced to the necessity of giving my buffalo skin rugs as bedding in a corner of the hall, and of seeing every sofa and couch occupied by sleeping men.

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Early this morning the Sister went to look for something lying on my escritoire, and stepped on what she thought was a bag. But hardly had she touched it when a yell from the supposed bag made her jump back. She had trodden exactly in the middle of poor Captain Thornhill, who had arranged a little bed for himself on the floor with a buffalo skin, and the not too fragrant cushion of my dog "Mino." In time of war refined and fastidious tastes go out of fashion. Captain Thornhill, curiously enough, had slept, during the retreat from Namur, at the cross roads of Quievrain-Jenlain, near Sebourg, and the chances of war seem to destine him to come in contact with my family. After having passed a month in the Aisne, not far from Maucreux,[1] he arrived here last night, and told me of the fighting round Sebourg, without, however, being able to give me any information about the château and its inhabitants.

This morning, after thanking me, General Allenby left in the Rolls-Royce with Colonel Birch, chief of his artillery. As I approached the car to give him a last handshake I ventured the question:

"General, will you come back?"

He replied: "It will be a bad sign, meaning we have been pushed back. And the day after we have passed you will have the German staff here."

This remark has left me very thoughtful. My general impression, after meeting General Allenby, is that the situation is very serious.

The British cavalry have come by forced marches from Braisnes-sur-Aisne, having defended this point and Villiers-en-Prayer for three weeks. The stages were thirty kilometres a day.

Here are some notes I took from an officer's notebook:

1st Cavalry Corps left Southampton 15th August, 1914. Disembarked Havre. Marches: Yvetot, Neufchâtel, Amiens, Cambrai, Maubeuge, Mons. And the retreat by Givry, Quievrain, Jenlain, Solesme, Roisel,

[1] The country house of my sister, the Marquise de Lubersac.

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Peronne, Montdidier, Estrée-St.-Denis, Senlis, Ermenonville, and as far down as Champs, near Paris, the property of M. Cahen d'Anvers. Then, after having gone as far as the Aisne, this corps held the trenches for three weeks, and was suddenly ordered to come to our help, while the French infantry replaced them on the front they had left.

On the 24th August Lille was an open town. Mons fell into the hands of the Germans on the 23rd August. Maubeuge still held out with 45,000 men, and at Antwerp there was the whole Belgian army.

On the 2nd September a German detachment ventured into Lille, but disappeared three days later. Then came the Battle of the Marne, which was the beginning of the race for the Channel ports, each army trying to outflank the enemy.

On the 3rd October the 21st French Army Corps came up from Champagne, and the 18th Division detrained in the region of Lille. In the morning of the 4th the battalion of Chasseurs of this division was placed at the north-east of the town, after having passed the night at Armentières. The 17th Battalion on arrival was greeted by a lively fusillade. Skirmishes extended up to the environs of Le Touquet, which explains why my daughter left Hardelot.

On the 7th October the French troops evacuated Lille, leaving only Territorials and Spahis, and withdrew to the Artois. On the 9th and 10th the French Cavalry Corps fought between Aire on the Lys and Armentières, near us. In spite of all efforts, it did not succeed in opening the road to Lille. A garrison of 4,000 men held out four days against an enemy ten times as numerous.

On the 9th, at ten in the morning, the order arrived that all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-eight must go to the Béthune Gate (Lille) and leave the town as quickly as possible.

What events there have been since the end of August which have cut us off, so to speak, from the rest of France!

Belgium lying bleeding, Louvain burnt down—there

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remains nothing of that splendid University with its wonderful library!

France lived through some agonizing hours in the early part of September.

The Germans reached Meaux, and Paris was threatened.

The victory of the Marne saved us; our Generals, officers, and soldiers rivalling each other in heroism—but what ruins! The magnificent cathedral at Rheims has been furiously bombarded, the fine statues of the big door, the stained glass are alike a confused heap—the crowning stones no longer exist. . . .

I hear also that during the first few days of September German aeroplanes were over Paris, and that unfortunately there were some victims of the raids.

The Belgian Government has asked the hospitality of France. It has removed to Havre. King Albert remains at the head of his army, and Queen Elisabeth has gone temporarily to join her children in England.

Tuesday: 18*th.*

Today everything has to be put in order—a disagreeable job—all this cleaning of the house with only two old crones from the village to help. There is damage to the trees in the park where the horses were hastily tied up, and the old men and women at the farms and in the villages are all groaning over the inevitable requisitions and marauding of the soldiers—whether in hen-house or in wine-cellar.

One old farmer's wife complained that all her eggs had disappeared—even the addled one, meant to lure the hens into laying. Her only source of comfort seems to be the conviction that this particular one will assuredly spoil the omelette for the officers mess!

I am doing my best to make them understand that these brave men are here to save their entire farms from the Germans. But alas! the Flemish race has deeply ingrained in it the traditional remembrance of the periodic pillaging by the troops that, once every

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hundred years at least, have passed through the country. The peasants are distrustful of all.

Friday: 16*th.*

Yesterday was a day of lively emotions. In the morning Madame Wambergue, wife of the attorney of Merville, sent to ask me for ice for the improvised ambulance she has established in her house. She said, too, that a young lieutenant of Dragoons, named Loiray, had been badly wounded at the battle of Lys. She had taken him in, with other unfortunates, and wanted to let me know that he had asked to see me as soon as possible. It is nearly five miles to Merville—to go on foot and return the same day is rather much for a woman who is only eating enough to keep body and soul together, and who is getting practically no sleep. I asked in the village if there was a horse available. I was told that even the oldest had been requisitioned. However, towards noon a man came and said that there was a horse with a wound on his back wandering in the fields, and belonging no doubt to our light cavalry, as he had a hoof on which there was an indication number. I had the horse brought up to the house, and an old phaeton was unearthed from the coach-house. It had been bought at Belvalette's, the famous coachbuilders, by my parents-in-law, for driving over the country during their honeymoon—a honeymoon that lasted, incidentally, fifty years, of which thirty-five were spent at La Motte au Bois! The condition of the horse made harnessing a problem, and getting him started, a miracle. But once going on the paved road, the little phaeton seemed to run of its own accord. It knew the way so well!

But there were plenty of obstacles on the road—lamentable convoys coming back, dismounted horsemen clinging to food carts or empty munition waggons. These men all looked worn out, most of them were wounded, with arms in slings or heads bandaged. Noticing an officer of the 30th Dragoons, I questioned him, asking him if he had any news of those of his comrades I knew. He confirmed the fact of Loiray

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being wounded, saying a bullet had penetrated one lung, and that, if I were going to see him, I must hide from him the information that Captain de Vauplane, Lieutenant de Lalande, and Lieutenant de St. Trivier have all been killed. Loiray, he said, was not in a condition to bear the shock.

It made a painful impression on me to think of all those youthful lives laid down—bravely, gaily indeed, as, when they had been my guests, their Colonel had reproached them for sleeping too long. Their next sleep was to be their last. The fight took place only five miles from here, and they were all dead before nightfall of that day when they had bidden me farewell so cheerily.

I went on again, but on the hill near the farm of Desnoullet at the edge of the forest it became impossible to get on with the road so blocked by the convoys. There was an idea that the Germans might make an offensive return on the Lys, and I was advised to leave the main road for one going across country, which I did. I had with me the man who had discovered the horse. About two o'clock I got to Merville, having taken longer to cover less than five miles than the old carrier, Auguste Calonne, did in the days before the war!

A sad sight greeted me at Madame Wambergue's. In a barn this splendid nurse—as she has turned out to be—has arranged mattresses and clean straw. The civilian doctor—the only one remaining at Merville—is doing prodigies, caring for all the unfortunate wounded, but without cotton wool, bandages, or anything. They are tearing up sheets and personal linen to bind the wounds. Men of all regiments and districts were lying together—North Africans in their "burnous" groaning beside poor young French boys. I looked for my friend Loiray, but he was not there.

Just then, Madame Wambergue, coming into her improvised hospital ward, asked me to follow her. In her own house she opened the door of a room on the first floor, and I saw the bloodless face of my poor little Loiray on the pillow.

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His charming smile welcomed me, and his first question was for his comrades. He was worrying about them, and his hot hand clasped mine nervously. I tried to show nothing of my feelings, and replied that all was well, that his friends had repulsed the Germans, and would soon be at La Motte au Bois. With supplicating eyes he begged me to have him at home, saying he knew he would get well much more quickly "in that heavenly old house." I went down to find the army surgeon. We met in the street and I made my request directly. He was rather a rough diamond, and made me very angry by saying: "Cavalry officers always expect to get all the privileges." I suppose he saw how disgusted I was at this gibe, for he then deigned to explain to me that a new German offensive was expected, and he would probably be obliged to evacuate his wounded, as he does not wish for a repetition of the ghastly business that has already occurred —that is, the massacre on the spot of all those wounded that they could not take prisoners. I dared not insist further; it was taking too great a responsibility on myself, there being always the possibility of La Motte au Bois sharing the fate of Merville. All I could do was to encourage Jean de Loiray, promising to return myself, and to send one of our Sisters of the Holy Heart of Mary, who is a nurse as well. It was agreed that a little pony carriage that was to go to La Motte for ice should bring the Sister back before nightfall. It was impossible for me to stay. I am wanted every moment at La Motte, so I jogged home again as best I could. What a night it was; it simply poured with rain!

About ten o'clock Paul de Soubeyran came in, soaked to the skin and covered with mud. He had come to see how I was faring, making the excuse that his horse had cast a shoe. We had a good fire. How glad the poor fellow was to find himself beneath a friendly roof. I stuffed his pockets with biscuits and tinned food, and made him drink a glass of good wine. His description of things makes one shiver. He told me how frightful it is to have to dig trenches rapidly in our heavy clay soil and under heavy fire. When they have

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no spades or picks they use their hands. He seemed to think he was dreaming in those few minutes of escape from the everlasting attacks, or challenges of "Who goes there?"

I held his horse whilst he mounted, and, thinking of his family, who are old friends, I let go his bridle to see him ride away into all sorts of dangers. But it had to be done. I said good-bye and wished him luck!

It has been a day of visits. I had Hubert Michel as well. He is General Hely d'Oissel's standard bearer, and came, like Paul de Soubeyran, directly from the fighting to see me. He asked me for a post-card and scrawled a line to his wife. But in the present state of the posts I doubt whether she will ever get it.

Saturday: 17*th.*

A letter from Amaury, the first for ten days, dated the 4th, and telling me that he is transferring to the Staff of the 102nd Brigade, and will be A.D.C. to General Leleu. He is heartbroken at leaving his platoon, but orders cannot be questioned.

Monday: 19*th.*

Our British Allies have sunk four torpedo boats off the Dutch coast. Thirty-one men of the crew were saved and landed in England.

Yesterday I went back to Merville. I was stupefied to find on going upstairs, that the little Sister was helping Loiray to dress. He was deadly white, looking ready to faint. The order for evacuation had come.

Madame Wambergue explained to me that the surgeon had advised everyone who had taken in wounded that they must send them off in the motor lorries requisitioned for the purpose. Between us we got Jean de Loiray downstairs, and found the lorry already waiting. In the straw at the bottom the poor Arabs were lying, each rolled in a blood-stained burnous. Loiray made a great effort, and, leaning on us, got up by stepping on his canteen. I passed it up to him and he sat on it. As the lorry jolted off he kissed his hand to us, saying, "Good-bye, little mothers!" He was so

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pale we thought he would faint, and there was no one to support him in the lorry. Sooner or later he would be rolling in the straw with his wretched brothers-in-arms.

I often wonder what these simple children of the desert think of us. These men, coming from Africa to fight for France, must be puzzled to see civilized people, who are always preaching peace to *them*, calling on them to take part in the most awful combats imaginable. One of them in the hospital at Merville struck me particularly—a tall, thin, bronzed Bedouin. He had both wrists broken by the bursting of his own gun when going to the attack. The barrel stuck in the mud, and the shock caused it to explode. He used to lie looking in a dazed way at his stumps, yet with a sort of oriental fatalism. In the bottom of the lorry, in the mud and straw, were cast-off bandages. The nurses, for the most part new to the job, had eagerly done their best, but their devotion was greater than their skill. As for the surgeon, he was almost distraught from the lack of practically everything necessary for a field ambulance.

This terrible want of organization among the Red Cross Services is likely to cost many lives, and proves how far *we* were from being prepared for war. We ought in peace to organize our civil hospitals in such a way that in time of war they may be immediately adapted to national service.

I have been suffering tortures since this visit to Merville, thinking perhaps Amaury is faring no better.

Tuesday: 20*th.*

The mails have got through at last.

I hear now, rather late in the day, through the first papers which have reached us after our long isolation, that on the 4th September the Government and Ministers addressed to the country a proclamation in which they announced their removal to Bordeaux.

It is, they say, to give them greater freedom in carrying on the sacred struggle that the Government and military power, acting in entire agreement, decided to do this.

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I don't care if the Government goes there. I, myself, will remain at the front.

All the same, there must have been grave news—while we have been solitary here—to provoke such a decision.

The Germans must have advanced very far.

The Government called a Cabinet Council directly it arrived at Bordeaux.

The Diplomatic Corps, accredited to France, with one exception,[1] has followed the Government.

On the 9th September, the forward march of the enemy seemed to have been checked and the right wing was obliged to retreat under the vigorous action of our troops, powerfully supported by the British Army.

On the 11th September, the enemy retreated about 40 kilometres, and from the 14th they were retreating all along the line.

So it was between the 4th and the 10th September that occurred the most decisive battle—that of the Marne—a strategic recovery.

Towards the end of September the Germans had retreated 80-100 kilometres.

Paris was saved, but the enemy turned its attention then to our front, and the race to the sea has placed us right in the fighting line.

General Foch, installed at Cassel without a command, has been the moving spirit of the united effort of the French, British, and Belgian troops engaged in the battles of Ypres and Yser.

I feel reassured to have as my neighbours the Staff of the G.H.Q. at Cassel, which is only 12 kilometres away from La Motte; but I am even more thankful to learn that Foch is now co-ordinating the operations of the Allies on the northern sector of the front.

Wednesday: 21*st.*

Today there arrived at La Motte au Bois Dr. Williams of the London Red Cross, with an interpreter, Monsieur Mouflard, and a hospital matron. They asked me to

[1] The late Mr. Myron T. Herrick, United States Ambassador, refused to leave Paris.

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take them to all the places where there is a possibility of installing an ambulance.

The sound of cannon is receding. The battle line appears to be rolling back.

I heard a cheering bit of news: some 33,000 Canadian volunteers have sailed for England, where they will undergo training. We shall not have the pleasure of welcoming them to France until the beginning of 1915.

Friday: 23rd.

My last letter to reach Amaury was one written on the 6th, to which he answers: "It is natural that you who are not fighting should be anxious for the safety of those who are. But that we should have cause for anxiety for those we have left behind is abominable, and this manner of making war on civilians is a disgrace to Germany. If you had seen what I have seen you would know that I have reason to fear for anyone who comes within reach of the Germans. But perhaps you have had a glimpse of the horrors amongst which I have been living for weeks. I am less afraid, knowing you as I do, but until I have a word from you later than the 6th I shall be horribly anxious."

Saturday: 24th.

The three members of the British Red Cross left us yesterday to go to Boulogne to confer with the surgeon-in-chief of the region. On Thursday Dr. Williams asked me to go with him to Hazebrouck to see the Mayor, the Abbé Lemire (who is also the Deputy), and the Sous Préfet. The last-named seemed to approve the plans at once, but the Mayor was slightly distrustful. While I did my best to translate what Mr. Williams said, the Abbé Lemire, seated at his desk, played thoughtfully with a paper-knife. But his expression changed when he realized that no one was asking his beloved town of Hazebrouck to "fork out"; that no subsidies were needed, and it was undertaken that any buildings lent would be returned in perfect order! I note this of the Abbé because it shows the honest and

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prudent servant of the public ever watchful of the interests of his town. Once conditions were arranged, he accompanied us, and for those who appreciate the little rancours of the "parish pump" school, it was amusing to see what followed.

In order to leave the Red Cross chauffeur free to overhaul his motor, I had hired a victoria. The driver was Ernest Defoort, the keeper of the tavern called The Truss of Straw (La Botte de Paille). It was here that in election time the gentlemen of the Opposition voted against our Deputy Mayor, the Abbé Lemire, whilst at the rival house, The Fleur de Lys, his supporters assembled.

What must the Opposition, peering out from behind the curtains of The Truss of Straw, have felt at seeing their host himself acting as coachman and footman combined to his Worship the Mayor; with myself as passenger, leading the car of the *Entente Cordiale* from one municipal office to another!

Sunday: 25th.

In the relative security of life at present I have returned to a more or less normal existence. I go up to my room at night, and though Sister St. Bernardin is still my neighbour she no longer shares a mattress on the floor with me.

Yesterday, at about five o'clock, I saw a car turn into the courtyard. It was driven by an English officer, Captain O'Conor, and there was a lady sitting beside him. She lifted her veil, and I recognized my daughter Emilie. I shall never forget this proof of her affection at such a time. Her own arrival is the first news I have had of her since she came in August with her devoted friend, Mrs. Chanler. She was then living at Hardelot, where she had taken a little villa on the day war was declared. At the moment when Paris was threatened they had a telegram from Emily Sloane urgently advising them to leave the Pas de Calais, and after a thousand wanderings and adventures they ended at Bordeaux. Then my daughter went to Arcachon with her two boys. Still with Mrs.

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Chanler she left for England to see Miss Sloane, who was just leaving for America. From there, greatly worried, and unable to get news of me, she, with immense difficulty, got a passage to Boulogne. Colonel Daru is Governor, and, knowing me, gave her a note for the English Red Cross, to whom I am already known by name, and the Red Cross authorities put a car at her disposal, driven by Captain O'Conor.

She stayed with me until this morning, and I should have liked to have kept her longer, but Captain O'Conor, anxious about the responsibility he had undertaken, and eager to get back to his work, decided that they must go, in spite of his own desire to prolong the visit. We have formed a real friendship, and I have the most grateful feelings towards this charming man. It is something to experience a little happiness in these quieter times, after the dreadful earlier days of the war, which made one feel that better days would never come.

Tuesday: 27th.

From Amaury I learn of the death of our poor friend, La Begassière, killed by a shot from an armoured car, which was treacherously flying the Red Cross flag.

Wednesday: 28th.

Yesterday there arrived together Captain Ponsignon, son-in-law of my uncle, Charles de Chaumont Quitry, and Robert d'Humières, husband of my young friend Marie de Dampierre, who is liaison officer to the Indian troops.

When they had gone the galloping of a horse attracted my attention. I went out and asked the mounted officer what he wanted. He said he had come to see if his cousin's château was still standing. I saw he did not recognize me, and asked his name. It was Count Robert Tascher de la Pagerie, a cousin, whom I had last seen as a small child. He seemed greatly surprised to find me here—did not even dismount—and merely remarked irrelevantly: "My wife's going to

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have a baby, but I don't know yet whether it will be a boy or a girl."

After this rather astonishing remark he clasped my hand, and galloped back to his column, that I could hear thundering past the gates. Poor distracted young man and future father!

Here we are at the end of October. What we have gone through already, and what may be in store for us!

Just now we see passing every day, with as much wonder as pleasure, the London motor buses, full of joyous Tommies, who give us the benefit of their amusing Cockney humour. It is extraordinary to see "Marble Arch" and "Hyde Park" tearing along at full speed towards Merville, or "Trafalgar Square" and "Charing Cross" disappearing into the forest via Vieux Berquin! Our local population remains open-mouthed at the sight of these unfamiliar vehicles. On every side one hears startled exclamations of "Ma," the Flemish abbreviation of Maria the Virgin, whom they invariably invoke under circumstances of an overwhelming nature. Yes, it seems a queer fate for a London bus, and I wonder how many of them will remain behind, stuck in our Flanders mud.

Saturday: 31*st.*

Today I was called to Hazebrouck to help with the installation of a French Ambulance at the Seminary (College of Priests). Here I was offered the post of Matron of the new hospital. But as I feel I am much more needed at La Motte au Bois, where there is only myself, I declined the honour of acting Matron, merely accepting the post in an honorary capacity, promising to go over and help in any emergency. I feel one cannot take on such work from a distance; one must be on the spot, and we never know what may happen at La Motte, nor how I may yet be needed.

Being in Hazebrouck, I went to see Albert de Moras, who gave me some information on the German occupation of Lille, which explains the events that alarmed me so much the night of the 26th August, when, sitting at my window, I heard all night the sound of trains

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rushing south. They were removing to the centre of France all the available rolling stock, so that they should not fall into the hands of the enemy. This is what a refugee told him: "A vast crowd besieged the trains; then there was a great exodus of cars, carriages, carts, and, lastly, an army of pedestrians all trying to get to Dunkirk and Gravelines. Many died on the way; others were made prisoners by the Uhlans. On the 10th, at dawn, the last train left. At 9 a.m. the bombardment began. It lasted till the 13th! And on the 13th, while a hundred fires were burning in the town, five companies of Bavarians made their entry. From then till 9 p.m. it was an uninterrupted defiling of Uhlans, dragoons, artillery, hussars, and infantry, whilst incendiary rockets and petrol finished the work begun by the shells!"

This occupation of Lille is a menace to us, as it is only forty kilometres away, so we seem destined to be invaded.

If it happens, we must resign ourselves to bear the yoke with dignity, and lose no chance of serving France as if we were free. It will mean a little more diplomacy, a little less openness, and for the rest—the Will of God be done!

NOVEMBER, 1914

Sunday: 1*st.*

At vespers today the gardener's wife came to tell me that two French officers wanted to see me. I went out from our little side chapel, and in the narrow path by the church I received my visitors, whilst the sermon was going on inside. Three chairs were brought out for Captain des Isnards, Captain La Tour du Pin, and myself, and very serious was the conversation we had. From the direction of Merville we could hear the rumbling of cannon, in the church the droning of the preacher's voice, while my friends explained their anxiety as to my position here, in the event of the formidable attack round Messines and Wulverghem,

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where two German Army Corps were engaged. I got my friends to go into church with me for the benediction. Prayer is a great consolation to the soul, but poor human nature being what it is, the classic cup of tea when we got home was also comforting!

Sister St. Bernardin was sitting by the fire rolling cigarettes for the wounded—quite an original occupation for a nun's Sunday. Then it was good-bye again. They are under orders for the north of Belgium, and they told me that a daring raid is to be made on the German cantonments.

Tuesday: 3rd.

This morning a Red Cross car with British officers in khaki arrived. They are Sir Maurice de Bunsen, former British Ambassador to Vienna, Mr. Frederick Guest, the Rev. Mr. Phipps, Captain O'Conor, who brought Emilie here the other day, and Dr. Rice, an American.

It seems they still have the idea of turning La Motte au Bois into a big British Ambulance Station. These gentlemen explored the château from garret to cellar, took notes, and drew plans. While they were busy the Sister and I laid the table. (By the way, I have forgotten to mention that my cook and maid have come back after rather tragic wanderings in the country and vain attempts to get away by train.) My dining-room has been unused for a long time, as I take my meals at the end of the table in the smoking-room. This being now too small, as a little joke, I laid two places on a small table for the Sister and Captain O'Conor, who had teased her a lot when he was here before. During the meal, Red Cross subjects being exhausted, the conversation turned, I don't know how, to La Belle Otero, the Spanish dancer. Someone asked what was the colour of her hair. No one was quite sure, but the little Sister, addressing me, said: "Madame, her hair is black."

A howl of laughter greeted this—and, really, it was rather surprising to be enlightened on this subject by a little nun. So I asked her how she came to be so well informed. The explanation was very simple. Before taking her vows she had been apprenticed in a work-

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room, to enable her eventually to direct the convent needlework, and during that time she had often carried home work to the customers. She had, in fact, taken things to Otero, who had even given her bonbons, and the shining raven locks of the beautiful actress had much struck the future novice.

After lunch my guests left me to see the Red Cross authorities at Boulogne, where they are founding a huge Red Cross centre for the English. I was just settling down to solitude again when I heard a succession of shots from the other side of the park. Thinking it was a detachment of Uhlans hidden in the woods, and trying to find their way out, I acted cautiously, but soon saw, jumping a hedge, some men in khaki. They carried sporting rifles, and some poacher's dogs were beating the undergrowth. I advanced, remarking rather dryly that the shooting is preserved and the rights belong to me, and that I do not give them even to the Allies, as I often need game when I entertain their generals and ambassadors. Indeed, I added, Sir Maurice de Bunsen had thoroughly enjoyed a pheasant. My remark was lucky. The officer named Wood had been a former attaché at the Embassy in Vienna when Sir Maurice de Bunsen was there. They were all most apologetic. Anyway, I didn't let our gallant poachers go without drowning our quarrel in a cup of tea. For once they had forgotten they were gentlemen and played at being schoolboys again! Major Russell and his friends really deserve a lesson. I will invite them to lunch off a fowl—not too young—whilst the pheasants that I made them give up hang in my larders!

I have just got rid of my last visitor. A certain Mr. Thomas Atkins—or should it be Paddy O'Grady, for he was certainly an Irishman—came and very solemnly besought me to lend him a revolver. He was, he said mysteriously, being "tracked by Uhlans." I saw pretty quickly that he and Bacchus were, at least, on friendly terms, and refused the loan. Whereupon he replied, in a most dignified manner, that "no lady ever refused a Tommy anything." Having thus been crushingly put in my place I shut the gates hastily.

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Wednesday: 4th.

A letter from Amaury, in which he tells me that 500 metres from where he is living a village has been razed to the ground. On a piece of waste land between the canal and the railway they fought for several days, until the death roll numbered three thousand. They were summarily buried, and everywhere there are graves. And the day before yesterday, All Souls' Day, each cross, without exception, was decorated with flowers and foliage. The soldiers did this themselves, for comrades of another regiment. It is very touching.

Thursday: 5th.

Lieutenant Morris, one of my poachers, came to lunch. As I wanted game, I sent him out to shoot pheasants! The others came and joined him in the afternoon. They tell me that Prince Antoine d'Orleans Bragance, the youngest son of H.R.H. the Count d'Eu, is in the English army, and billeted at Hazebrouck.

Friday: 6th.

Today I had a visit from two Englishmen, a Captain in the Royal Navy, and Major Cockerell. They came to see if there was a possible *port d'attache* for an airship. These airships carry 120 men. The idea was abandoned as the clearing in the forest is not large enough.

The papers announce the rupture with Turkey; the Allied Ambassadors left Constantinople three days ago.

The Turks are preparing to defend their shores under the eye of German officers. They have sunk gunboats to prevent their capture by French ships.

Sunday: 8th.

Yesterday Army Service Corps men arrived, what we call "rice, bread, and salt men."

A Paris barrister, M. Henri Biget, acted as interpreter. He was cheerful and agreeable. He told me that he had been counsel for the Bonnaut band[1] in Paris.

There are forty cars in the village. I put the officers

[1] A famous band of burglars.

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up on my own floor as well as I could, and the room occupied by M. Biget communicated with that used by our little Sister. Going upstairs we took it into our heads that it really wasn't quite proper for a good little nun to have an unlocked door with an interpreter—or any other sort of soldier man—on the other side of it. So we set to work to improvise a barricade as noiselessly as possible. We were easily able to screw in two little rings, but when it came to joining them together there was a rasping noise that must have attracted the attention of our neighbour. Imagine our embarrassment when he assured us this morning he had believed it was an attempt on his virtue! Well, it only proves how the most innocent acts in life may be misconstrued!

Tuesday: 10*th.*

Yesterday I had a visit from Prince Antoine d'Orleans Bragance. When I expressed my astonishment at seeing him in British uniform he told me that both he and his brother, Prince Louis, had offered their services first to France and then to Belgium. The first refused because they are of the House of Bourbon, and the second because of the possibility of complications! To avoid a third refusal in England, they went privately to the recruiting office and were enrolled. I used to know the young Prince at Versailles about 1904 when he came to the Barral Montferrat, and we had much to say about old times.

The interpreter, M. Biget, is a musician. He plays the violin in the evenings. Somehow, a violin alone always seems to recall a country dance—and one almost sees the violinist stuck up on a barrel. For lack of scores for violin and piano we are debarred from using the Bechstein, which has been silent since the beginning of the war.

Wednesday: 11*th.*

Prince Antoine has been to see me again. He must be pretty bored at Hazebrouck to want to come to La Motte au Bois for distraction. Our amusements are not exactly deliriously exciting!

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Our A.S.C. officers are going to leave us. It is a pity, as they are agreeable men. One of them went all through the retreat from Mons. Taken prisoner in the Forest of Compiègne, with his car and a forage waggon, he found he would be forced to march in the vanguard of the Germans in their attack on the British army. To start both car and lorry and go full speed ahead was the only possible means of escape. He took it, and after having gone through the devastating fire of both sides, he and his twenty men found themselves safely back in the British lines.

Every two days my officers go up to the front, and I get news of what is happening. As they often return late, and I don't like leaving the house open, I asked them to come in by the kitchens, where their orderlies sleep. One night I heard such a violent rapping at a kitchen window that I got up and looked out. The orderlies slept so heavily that at last I went down myself to shake up the men who had taken away the key. One of them, half awake, and not realizing what had happened, ran round the kitchen in nothing but a shirt looking for a revolver! All ended well, the late-comers getting in at last. But British modesty was so severely shocked that, though I was merely amused at the sight of the long, thin Tommy perambulating vaguely in his fluttering garment, he himself was so overcome that each time I see him he blushes to the roots of his hair!

I had this charming and pathetic letter from dear Jean de Loiray:

LYON.
8th November, 1914.

MADAME,

You will forgive my bad writing, which will still allow me to express my deep gratitude. I owe to you the only happy hours I have had since the beginning of the war. I can never forget your welcome at La Motte au Bois, your motherly kindness, and all the comforting things you said after that nice little supper we had in the middle of the night.

Then our regiment went off in such a hurry. We didn't know the exact state of things, but I felt somehow that I should see you again, and that you would

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come to no harm. You do more by your heart and prayers than we do by our weapons!

Later, when I needed consolation and courage I found myself at Merville, and you came to me. Your care and cheery words went with me to the horrible lorry itself. I found everything easier to bear because I had left two little mothers whose memory is for ever in my heart.

I am answering a letter from poor Madame Wambergue announcing the death of her son. What a terrible grief it must be for that poor woman! When you see them will you tell them of my sorrow for them? You will be able to express it better than I can, and perhaps console them.

I have seen M. de St. Victor here, and have had good news of you and your family. I hope when better days come to be able to return and thank you again.

My awful writing will show that I have not got back the use of my arm, and the wound in my back is not yet healed. It is very slow. Please remember me to the good Sisters at La Motte au Bois.

Friday: **20*th*.**

For a month there has been heavy fighting in Flanders, At once most moving and most comforting it is to know that the Allies, never breaking, never abandoning their lines, have resisted most formidable assaults and put out of action more than 120,000 Germans; *The Times* even puts the figure at 200,000.

Sunday: **22*nd*.**

All this month the cannon has never stopped, and has become a sort of dull accompaniment to our daily life.

Yesterday a young English officer, looking very pale and as if he had suffered greatly, came to find me. He had been sent by General Byng as billeting officer for his division. This young man struck me at once by his distinction, tact, and extreme politeness. He was Lieutenant John Bigge,[1] son of Lord Stamfordham, and A.D.C. to General Byng, commanding the Third Cavalry Division, I offered him tea and cakes, but he preferred, before accepting them, to see the bedrooms and drawing-

[1] See p. 133.

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rooms as well as kitchens and out-buildings. While we went over the house he described his life in the trenches. He had been through that terrible experience, the Battle of Ypres, between the 12th and the 20th. The weather was awful, and for several days he had not been able to dry himself. With what obvious satisfaction he stuck the billeting tickets on the doors with drawing-pins. Finally, he chose his own room, drank a cup of tea, and got into his car. At that very moment another car drove into the courtyard, an officer got out, and going up to young Bigge told him that General Allenby, knowing the château (he passed the night of the 11th and 12th October here), had sent him to make his billeting arrangements there. Poor Bigge could only bow and go and look for billets elsewhere. I was very sorry, as he seemed so nice, and was so very disappointed. I am none the less delighted to think of seeing my former guests again. General Allenby made a very strong impression on me at the time of his former visit.

Monday: 23rd.

General Leleu, Amaury tells me in a letter I received today, has been on a fortnight's leave. His son was killed at the front, and his wife's house at Arras having been burnt down during the bombardment, he went to instal her in Brittany.

"During his recent journey across France he gained a most favourable impression of the young men who are in training at the depôts, and who are to make the great push when the moment arrives. It appears that the British reinforcements have a remarkable tenacity. We have this advantage over the Germans: they have put out all their strength, whereas our effort was slow in starting but will be more lasting. . . .

"Why did Germany make war? To impoverish France and England, so that in time she would have the monopoly of European commerce. By systematic pillaging of towns, burning of factories, and destruction of our national industries, she hopes to accomplish our ruin. If we make peace before we have done at least as

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much damage to Germany as she has done to us, she will have partly realized her aim. We must first destroy her army, and then ruin her commerce and her industry, decisively and for a long while. It is terrible, but it was not we who wanted war.

"I do not know if these ideas are current in France; it is necessary that they should be known. England seems to have understood from the beginning of the campaign, and has taken measures which showed that she expected the war to be of long duration."

Tuesday: 24th.

On Saturday, the 21st, the British Cavalry Corps made its last effort on the Ypres front. They held on, with this poor tortured town as base, till the arrival of reinforcements, and then came here for a rest. For the first time I have under my roof the whole Staff of an Army Corps. One wonders how it was possible for those men to hold on so long, for, in the cavalry, a man is required for the care of every four horses. Out of the 18,000 to 15,000 men commanded by General Allenby, the proportion of dismounted men for trench fighting is very small. It was high time the infantry came to relieve them.

I have to put up just now in the château twenty-two officers, orderlies, and cooks. In the outbuildings there are a dozen cars, in the orangery telegraph and telephone installations. On the lawn is a solitary telegraph pole for wireless, to send our messages and to intercept those of the enemy. I have no doubt they return the compliment. The avenues are blocked up with all sorts of carts and waggons and immense wooden reels, on which are wound the miles of wire destined to transmit orders to the four points of the compass.

The house seemed to fill up in a few minutes, all except the little corner to the extreme right that I have so far kept for myself. My apartments consist of an entrance hall, my library, and five bedrooms on the upper floors. General Allenby has shown himself extremely thoughtful and tactful, and has declined to make use of all that I offered him—including the big

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dining-room. This sympathetic discretion has done much to cement our friendship.

Lieutenant Capel, one of the Staff, was billeted with the Misses Foubert, the village milliners (not the first time, by the way, that millinery has played a part in his life). As he is an intimate friend of one of my nephews, I offered him a room in my own part of the house. He accepted on condition that he was allowed to bring a great friend, Captain Thornhill, who has been with him since the beginning of the war. The last-named was born in India and is with the Indian troops.

I am already beginning to have domestic worries. My cook is frightfully bad-tempered. Cleanliness with her is a virtue pushed to the point of mania. She cannot endure the dirt and untidiness produced by army orderlies and cooks in her hitherto spotless kitchen. Pheasants' heads, vegetable refuse, etc., litter the tiled floors which used to shine like mirrors, and now she flies into rages whenever things go awry.

I act as buffer—a thankless job! The peasants are constantly complaining, too. The troopers are taking possession of barns, stables, and paddocks for their horses, and the rooms and garrets in the farms for themselves. Sometimes things become absurd and one laughs, but it is not always easy.

Yesterday, for instance, the widow Huyghe, a farmer's widow, came to me protesting loudly. A baby calf had been separated from its mother, flung out of the barn, and hunted in the forest as a rabbit! As luck had it, General Allenby was standing in the courtyard just as I came in, very cross at these everlasting complaints. The General was talking to two other "Brass Hats," one of whom was General Barrow, of the Indian Army. Without considering whether the moment was well chosen, and in some excitement, I attacked him at once. My English is not very extensive, but I tried to make my grievance known.

"General, a farmer's wife says that a little veal, who was in the stable, has been put out by your men! The veal is in the forest. The men are hunting the veal. The veal will be lost."

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The General smiled enigmatically, but at once gave severe orders in favour of the "veal." Today, feeling calmer, I invited the General and several of his officers to lunch, as a mark of my gratitude.

As a dish of veal was being served, the General said solemnly to one of my guests: "What sort of meat have you there?"

"Veal, sir," was the quick reply.

"You've made a mistake," said the General, "it's calf; the Baroness told us the veal is in the forest."

And, later, a photograph of myself launching my thunderbolts on the subject of the "veal" was given to me!

Thursday: 26th.

The *Temps* published yesterday a note on the communiqués of the last six weeks. It is encouraging. Since the 8th September the formidable mass of troops attacking us has not been able anywhere to break our lines. At many points it has even had to retreat before our push.

I have been told the marvellous story of Vice-Admiral Ronarc'h's defence of Dixmude. He and his 6,000 young Breton recruits were attacked by the Germans on the 16th October; a message was sent to them asking them to hold out for four days to cover the Allies' movements. They held out valiantly for four *weeks*, only giving in to an attack by overwhelming numbers (40,000 Germans) on the 10th November. The Belgians very heroically helped in the defence of Dixmude—this has become a legendary feat of arms for our two countries.

My informant also told me how five German army corps, consisting of 1,300 battalions, advanced to the attack on the 1st November, singing their national anthem to their German god. The Allies resisted them successfully, but the attack was so fierce that even the cavalry had to fight on foot with the infantry.

Amaury writes and tells me that on the day of the Battle of Dinant, 23rd August, one of the Staff officers of his division told the colonel that he had seen him in so dangerous a position that it was futile to hope he

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could have escaped alive. One hour later his death was confirmed. The same thing happened, he says, at the Battle of the Marne, when he was patrolling round La Fère Champenoise. In spite of all these reports he is in perfect health, and warns me to believe no ill-tidings until I have the assurance they are true.

Friday: 27th.

English aviators have flown over and bombarded Friedrichshafen, trying to get the hangars of the German airships.

Commander Briggs, wounded, was forced to land, but his two comrades got back safe and sound to the French lines. All three have been mentioned by the General-Governor of Belfort.

Monday: 30th.

On the 25th, hearing that my nephew, de Champagné, a volunteer, had been seriously wounded at the Battle of St. Eloi, near Ypres, I went to Rosendael, near Dunkirk, where he was being nursed. But I arrived too late, as his wife had come for him, and they were then on their way to Paris.

While lunching at the Hôtel des Arcades I met Captain des Isnards and Captain de Scitivaux, and they pointed out François de Croisset in what struck me as a most smart uniform. A little farther off was M. Stocklet, our civil engineer, in a green one. There was one woman, a nurse in khaki—short skirt bound with leather, and boots. She seemed to me to be dressed rather for shooting than tending the sick!

When getting my train back I met a number of German prisoners. They looked worn out and demoralized. I was particularly struck by the arrogant appearance of the officers, which contrasted with the servile bearing of the common soldiers. Some looked like scrofulous students, with gold-rimmed spectacles, others like little factory hands. There was one fine-looking, bold fellow—alone of his kind—proud, curly-haired, seeming oddly out of place among the repulsive crowd.

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I placed him as a Hungarian. All were bareheaded and ill-clothed.

Our return journey was tiresome and difficult. Four times was our engine taken from the train and attached to an army one, and it was an old crawling machine that finally dawdled into Hazebrouck. It was ten o'clock when we reached the station. All movement is forbidden after six o'clock, and I wondered who on earth could take me home.

Then I thought of Prince Antoine. Being in the British Army he might get me the loan of a car. So I rang at the door of M. Didry, the solicitor. His Highness was playing billiards. With a good grace and kindness I shall never forget, the Prince accompanied me in the pouring rain to the garage Defoort to see if I could get a car or carriage of any kind. Defoort was afraid, as discipline is severe. Prince "Toto," as his friends call him, went to see if the Chief of Police was still up. During his absence I told Defoort who his visitor was, and the good man seemed greatly struck that "such a grand gentleman should be so affable." He went and fished out a bottle of old port, and when the Prince returned with the good news that the Chief himself would drive me back, he was made to have a glass with me and the worthy Defoort. I seized the occasion to tell Prince Antoine that the "Truss of Straw" ought to be called the "King's Head" today.

Well, I didn't do badly. In the morning the Governor of Dunkirk, General Plantey, lent me his car, and at night the English Chief of Police of the district took me home himself!

I have organized my life independently of the British Staff, but the officers know that, their work ended, they will find, on my side of the château, the "home" they miss. So the door of communication between their quarters and mine is open at about five o'clock. Tea is always ready for my friends in the district; the officers billeted round about come in, and never go away without being introduced to me.

General Allenby often comes, and if he has a little leisure we take a stroll in the forest. His favourite walk

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THE BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE AND GENERAL SIR EDMUND ALLENBY, 1914

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is by the "Grand Dam," a pretty corner of the canal. He has found a kingfisher there. Very susceptible to the beauties of nature, he seems to know all the birds, their songs, plumage, and habits. He watches the ways of the fishes in our little Flemish canals and irrigation creeks, and he has shown me a nest of perch. The eggs were hanging to the water weeds, for the mother seemed to be resting, while the father rushed to catch a big grasshopper and then to fight a fish twice his own size.

DECEMBER, 1914

Tuesday: 1st.

Today a competition was held for the dogs of the officers of the Cavalry Corps. Seven rats were released from a trap by my old gardener. There were six of the officers' dogs and my fourteen-year-old German dachshund. Sad to relate, the six officers' dogs caught only one rat between them, whilst my dachshund caught six, and, what is more, she ate them. The result was disastrous, and she is very ill.

Thursday: 3rd.

When I returned from visiting the hospital at Hazebrouck—now in regular working order—General Allenby said that tomorrow both the King of England and the Prince of Wales are expected here. They are coming to decorate some of the officers and men of the Cavalry Corps. General Allenby added that the King would certainly wish to see me. My first idea was to improvise a modest little war-time banquet, but the General assured me that the King is so busy that he will not be able to stay for more than two hours at the most. He is expected at nine in the morning. All I can do is to arrange my corner of the château as prettily as possible. The Camp Commandant himself had asked me to take away all valuable furniture and bric-à-brac from those rooms used by my guests for fear of damage. My private hall looks like an antique shop in consequence!

In the evenings I usually have visits from some of the senior officers, who generally retire to their own rooms

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about ten-thirty. As soon as the way is clear the communication door opens, and a brown, gold, or red head appears.

"Baroness, are the Generals gone?"

Receiving a nod from me, there is instantly an invasion of the younger officers. They sit on every possible seat, and the last comers à la Turque on the floor. Soon there is a delicate haze of cigarette smoke floating in the room, dominated by the pipe, the inevitable pipe, of Boy Capel. Books are tossed from hand to hand, and the nice boys, whom I call "my rascals," stay and chaff till midnight or one o'clock.

I am always the last to put out the lights, which makes Major Fraser say: "You will lose your beauty sleep, Baroness!"

He always says "Ha, ha!" before speaking, so is known as "Ha-Ha-Zebrouck."

This evening we were all sitting here, and Captain Baggalay told me he had been asked to tell me something that had been forgotten. It appears that when the King comes from a distance he likes to retire for a "wash and brush up." I have a well-arranged little dressing-room on the ground floor, so I immediately went off with my maid and began to prepare it for the King's arrival. It is in this place that I keep my garden hats and coats, as it sometimes saves a journey upstairs.

It was late when I went back to "my rascals," scolding them for not coming to help me, when I suddenly remembered I had left my old coats hanging in the cupboard.

"Oh, boys!" I said, "I have forgotten to take off my clothes for the King!" (How I wish I had learnt to speak English when I was young!)

My audience collapsed to a man, and laughed till I thought they would be ill—some even going at once to tell the Generals. Two or three of these came downstairs in slippers to congratulate me on my ideas of the ceremonial suitable to the reception of Royalty. General Allenby assumed a shocked air, and declared that French ways of receiving a King were quite contrary to those in vogue in England, where ladies even put on

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special clothes to go to Court! I am sure I shall never hear the end of this mistake of mine!

Friday: 4th.

Luckily today was fine. From eight o'clock onwards the cavalry was drawn up along the Hazebrouck road, the horses' heads in perfect line, to right and left. Before the château the officers were standing by their horses, held by the bridle.

The Prince of Wales arrived first. He looks a mere boy, fresh, pink-and-white, and charming. He examined the cars with great interest and made the officers' dogs jump over his stick. I was watching discreetly from behind the hall curtains. I had arranged everything as well as I could—a big Louis XIV. boule desk in the middle of the hall, and on it the visitors' book, hoping that the King might sign it. A few bottles of champagne and some biscuits were on the sideboard. I put on the best dress I had in my wardrobe to receive the King!

The men who were to receive the medals assembled under the lime-trees, while on a card-table I had lent them were the cases containing the decorations. At nine o'clock exactly the King walked into the courtyard, having left his car to follow him for the last half-mile or so. General Allenby, in full active service uniform, presented his Staff. He then said a few words to the King, and I saw the latter come towards my quarters, followed by his Equerry and the General. In spite of the extremely simple and modest bearing of the Royal Personage, I felt rather overwhelmed at receiving thus in my house the King of Great Britain. It has been an eventful and historical day for our little Flanders village.

General Allenby, as always, said the right thing, and what the King said to me was to this effect:

"Madame, I hope you have no complaints against the British Army?"

"No, Sire," I replied; "when one has the pleasure of receiving General Allenby as a guest, it would ill become one to complain. If Your Majesty considers

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him as a good general, I regard him as a great gentleman."

The King introduced his Equerry, who was no other than Lord Stamfordham, the father of that charming Captain Bigge who had been so disappointed at having to retire before the Staff billeting officer.

I did the honours of the château, telling the King its history, not even forgetting to say that we still have traces in our old battlements of the days when France and England were *not* allies! We have, too, some cannon balls of 100 years ago, which are rolled up as weights against the doors of stables and barns on windy nights. The King asked to be shown one of the English relics, so I sent old Theophile to get one, and, trembling, he offered it to the King. His Majesty looked at it rather doubtfully, and observed that it had no trade mark. He also showed great interest in the fine trophies of the chase which my husband shot in Canada and the Rockies. He had not, he said, a single example of a certain great moose which spreads its antlers across a panel. I would have offered it to His Majesty had it not belonged to my son.

I then ventured to ask the King his opinion of the war.

"My cousin William thinks *he* will win, but he won't," said the King, with an energy that delighted me. "We shall conquer."

Then the champagne was poured out, and we drank good luck to the Allies.

The King walked along the ranks of soldiers in the courtyard of the château. I watched him pin on the breast of each man the cross he had won, saying a word to the recipient as he did so. The young Prince stood by, and handed each case to his father as it was wanted. The soldiers presented arms, and the King returned to say good-bye to me. I wanted to meet the Prince, but, tired out by the long ceremony, he had already disappeared twice, and Lord Stamfordham did not seem hopeful of finding him! Finally, the King signed not only the visitors' book, but an old volume of Sanderus', "Flandra Illustrata," in which there is a print of the

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THE PRINCE OF WALES, OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE CAVALRY CORPS WAITING FOR THE KING, 4TH DECEMBER, 1914

H.M. KING GEORGE DECORATING MEN AT LA MOTTE, 4TH DECEMBER, 1914

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ancient fortress "Der Walle" (La Motte au Bois) in the times of the Counts of Flanders. The King left us about half-past eleven to go to Bailleul and Vieux Berquin.

They tell me now that, during the Royal visit, several Taubes were trying to fly over the château, but they were driven away as they reached Hazebrouck. In spite of the utmost secrecy having been observed, the Germans knew that the King and Prince were here!

Civilians are absolutely forbidden to move about now, but Captain Capel has a car here, and in this way I can get to Hazebrouck sometimes.

Saturday: 5th.

Last night I saw in the courtyard a motor-car gorgeous with heraldic devices. I was told Colonel Count Ignatieff, the Russian Military Attaché, had arrived with Jean de Laborde. This curious mixture struck me as piquant! I sent a message to say I should be happy to see the Count. He came with his improvised aide-de-camp. Both accepted my invitation to dinner; then, as nothing important called them elsewhere, they remained the night.

Count Ignatieff installed himself in a room on the second floor generally occupied by my daughter, and Laborde had to put up with a mattress on the library carpet. But it was a deliciously soft mattress!

When at eight o'clock this morning Count Ignatieff descended with dignity and a heavy tread in enormous boots, his stout person moulded in his tunic and the tight Russian trousers, he appeared highly satisfied. The English officers and myself in the hall were watching this magnificent spectacle, when the Count stopped on the staircase and said, in a voice of thunder and a terrific Russian accent:

"Madame, your bed was excellent!"

This sublime tribute was too much even for British stolidity. The scene was really so comic that none of those present are likely to forget it.

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Tuesday: 8*th.*

Two days ago a Taube passed over the house, and a quarter of an hour later my windows rattled so loudly that I thought they must have been broken. The explosion was at Hazebrouck. As Captain Capel's car was just leaving the château I took advantage of the chance of going there.

The town was in a state of uproar. There were fifteen victims of the raid—nine English soldiers and seven civilians—amongst whom was a woman who had to have one arm and one leg amputated. The baby in her arms was killed outright. The husband and son of this unfortunate creature were killed in the passage of the house. She happened to be standing at the door with her youngest child.

It is curious, but the explosion itself seems to have been felt much more at La Motte au Bois, some four miles away, than in many parts of the town itself much nearer the spot.

I have had some very unexpected visitors—my nephew Renauld de Chaumont Quitry, who stayed a night, and Jean Bertrand de Luppé, who came to lunch.

Wednesday: 9*th.*

The Government has returned to Paris. The *Temps* speaks of the close Franco-British co-operation and the cordial relations between the two countries.

The English feel they are in a friendly country, and show by their courtesy their appreciation of the good intentions of the French.

Thursday: 10*th.*

Yesterday bombs were dropped again in Hazebrouck. It is becoming so common now that I feel it is hardly worth noting in my diary. On this occasion one fell into the basin of the fountain in the garden of my friends the Moras. The goldfish were thrown up into the air and fell back on the grass, and all the windows were broken.

A few days ago we had great excitement in the

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kitchen. A rafter caught fire, and they had to destroy part of the stove. The General is dismayed, and I must say I am very angry, as it is entirely owing to the carelessness of the orderlies and cooks. They put out the fire with such quantities of water that they merely changed the disaster from fire to flood.

About the same time my cook had a row with the General's cook, and threw a pan of boiling water at him. She seized the man by the throat and had nearly strangled him when the General and myself, attracted by the uproar, intervened, each striving to "collect" our respective combatants. Having torn them apart, I gave Berthe her eight days' notice. But her departure is casting a gloom over the Staff, who thoroughly appreciate her cooking!

The day before yesterday, in the ironing-room, Divine Service was held for the Staff. I lent candlesticks and flower vases. The clergyman occupies a room on the second floor, where, in the place of honour, is a huge portrait of Pope Pius IX. The reverend gentleman, who does not lack wit, thanked me for the gracious idea of giving him a room where the Holy Father is giving him a perpetual benediction. I retorted that both benediction and malediction are called down by the uplifted hand! It is difficult to judge without words, but I added that, as our guest and ally, I felt sure the Pope was blessing him.

Saturday: 12*th*.

Paris, pulling itself together silently, bringing all its energy to resist the threatened invasion, has recovered confidence and its old need of animation.

Theatres and music halls have reopened. The Comédie-Française and the Opéra have organized matinées, which are having huge success. The "Marseillaise" and the marching song have been sung before an enthusiastic public.

The British Navy has just won a great victory at the Falkland Isles. Three German cruisers were sunk.

This great success marks more than ever the supremacy of the British Fleet.

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Amaury writes that the owner of the château where he is staying will have no cause to complain of him. He prevents his men from cutting down the trees in the park and from removing the wire round the enclosures, remembering La Motte au Bois, which he would like to be as well cared for by those who are occupying it.

My letters of the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th October reached him on the 7th November.

Monday: 14*th.*

A very comforting letter from Amaury. He speaks again of Emily Sloane and of their interest in one another. He tells me not to be anxious for his safety, for our destiny is prearranged. "During the last few months," he says, "I have seen so many unexpected deaths, so many miraculous escapes, that danger ends by becoming a thing of no account. It is everywhere, and nowhere." In one of my letters I begged him to be brave, but not foolhardy. He replies that it is not possible to exceed one's duty, for under present conditions duty has no limits. But he tells me to have faith in his will to live, to have confidence, and to arm myself with courage.

Tuesday: 15*th.*

On the 11th, as I was going downstairs, I saw an English General and another officer talking to General Allenby. Both were introduced to me, and as I did not catch their names, I concluded the General was the more important. It was not until the moment of their departure I discovered the officer was Prince Arthur of Connaught, and there was just time to apologize and make amends for my lack of attention to a member of the English Royal Family.

In spite of the morass the meadows and park have become at this season, the Tommies organized a football match. All the Staff, and Prince Arthur of Connaught, seemed greatly interested in the game. The spectators sat on rustic benches, and the Tommies shouted applause and derision when one of the players fell on the slippery

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turf. I was much impressed by the suppleness and agility of the men. They must be powerful opponents for the Germans!

Yesterday, Robert d'Humières, still attached to the British Army, brought Captain de la Ferronays to see me. Both are at Inches, near Béthune. When one thinks that this wretched little place, lost among the canal crossings and flooded country, is the refuge of men accustomed to the utmost comfort, and that not one ever complains, it is not surprising that we feel confident of victory—thanks to their abnegation and energy. With a thoroughly French "verve" they describe some of the horrible adventures and lodgings they have to put up with, declaring that, after all, Inches is, nevertheless, an Eden!

Friday: 18*th.*

A letter from a friend who has heard of the visit of King George to La Motte au Bois, suggesting that I should rechristen it La Motte au Roi.

At the same time I received a copy of the *Daily Mail*, in which there is an account of the royal visit and a description of the old book that the King signed his name in. "It should recompense the Baronne," says the *Daily Mail*, "for all that she has suffered."

German cruisers bombarded ports of the English coasts, West Hartlepool and Scarborough both being hit.

There was no trace of panic, though there were twenty people killed and fifty wounded.

The German ships remained an hour in sight of the shore and got away finally, thanks to the fog.

Saturday: 19*th.*

Yesterday, General Allenby introduced Colonel Squire to me. He is the American Military Attaché in London, a very neat, well-groomed man, and very polite. He tells me that President Wilson is very well disposed towards the Allies, and that public opinion is becoming more enlightened as to German intrigue, since the widespread sale of translations of books like those of F. von

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Bernhardi, which reveal the long preparation for the attack and invasion of Belgium.

When I expressed my astonishment at the continued neutrality of America, he assured me that America is rendering greater service at present to the Allies than if she were a combatant, since we are drawing great supplies of munitions from her. I could not help remarking that Germany is doing the same. He replied: "Perhaps; but they have to go and get them, and it is up to the Allies to capture their ships at sea!"

Well, that appears to me to be "running with both hare and hounds."

Sunday: 20th.

General Allenby took me yesterday to see the battlefields from the heights of Sherpenberghe. At the foot of a windmill which dominates the country, we both looked through field-glasses at that vast horizon of Messines, Ypres, past St. Eloi--so bitterly disputed—and just able to make out in the mist Furnes and Nieuport. A cloud of black smoke showed that yonder a huge shell was bursting over our lines. Above us an English aeroplane was preparing to land quietly. Night fell, and the dark horizon became streaked with battle lights. It looked like an Olympian thunderstorm.

I glanced at the tall form of General Allenby, and thought what it must have been to this energetic, strong-willed man to have had to retreat with his cavalry, losing all the ground gained in the heavy fighting of October. Suddenly he asked if the sight interested me. I replied that under Louis XIV. and Louis XV. battle horizons must have been more interesting to the fair ladies that the Prince de Condé and M. de Turenne wished to gratify by a little excursion! For here I do not see, as in my pretty Flemish prints, the cavaliers in a wild pursuit, the infantry forming block à la Française, and moving in a single mass towards the enemy.

In the brusque tone which I know is his way of joking, he answered: "Madame, you are brought here to the highest points of the country, where sovereigns, great personages, and Members of Parliament come to study

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modern war, and you see nothing. You criticize! Well, we won't bring you again!"

After that, of course, there was nothing left for it but to go home! The car awaited us in the deep lane below the mill, and getting back to the main road we went at a foot pace, in spite of the little flag, denoting the Commander-in-Chief of an army corps, which, attached to the hood, fluttered in the wind.

"Modern war is completely different," I remarked; "all the activity is at the rear. On the front there is only devotion and obscure heroism which, far from the eyes of those who would fain see it, sacrifices everything for this dearly loved land of France!"

Monday: 21*st.*

Having acquired a taste for adventurous journeys, the General and I went yesterday to Cassel. The weather was frightful. The heavily falling snow quite prevented us from seeing the wonderful view usually to be got from this rising in the middle of the plain. There are the Chaussée Brunehaut, Dunkirk, Ypres, Lille, and St. Omer. The Chaussée Brunehaut is the original Roman road, and it is said that the present paving of cobbles is a thousand years old. It takes its name from the story of the French Queen in those far away, half-legendary times, who was said to have been tied to the tail of a wild horse.

Speaking of the marvellous view, there is a story told of a certain Casselois, seated drinking his beer, who announced the fact that "from Cassel you could see three kingdoms and a republic."

"The French Republic, yes," said his listener, "and Belgium, and England in clear weather. But the third kingdom, what is that?"

Giving three whiffs of his pipe while his beer frothed, the worthy Casselois closed one eye and replied with another query: "And what about the Kingdom of God?"

This last was invisible to us in such weather, and knowing the General's passion for children, I proposed a visit to Madame Wakernie. Her son, André. had quite

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a little brood, the last, and only boy, being three years old. He gave the military salute very smartly, and the General took him up in a fatherly way and gave him a ride on his knee.

The Belgian Army was so much decimated by the fighting which took place in the neighbourhood of Nieuport at the end of October that resort was had to inundation in order to put an end to the German advance from the side of the dunes. A Belgian officer tells me they were provided with the key to this method of defence by the fortuitous discovery of a legal document dated 1798 in the house of a magistrate at Furnes. This method had not been used since that time. A simple employé in charge of dykes undertook, at the risk of his own life, to open up the land to the invasion by the sea, and thus put an obstacle in the way of invasion by the Germans, who, indeed, at first thought the inundation to be accidental. In a few days the district round Nieuport was under two or three metres of water.

So we have gained new allies—the waves of the sea!

The first Army wedding has just been solemnized in the Town Hall of Hauteville, near Arras.

The bridegroom, who belonged to a platoon of Territorial Cyclists, arrived from the trenches the night before, and came to the ceremony on a bicycle.

Three soldiers acted as witnesses and waited at the Town Hall.

At half-past ten an Army car brought the bride, accompanied by a friend.

The official performing the civil ceremony was quite a young lieutenant, and, helmet on head, he pronounced the words of the ritual—even making quite a good job of the customary address to the newly married couple!

An old retired school master made out the certificate, and, as the old song says, "Each one went his own way home."

Saturday: 26*th.*

Every English soldier fighting in the trenches, every sailor afloat on the North Sea, every wounded man in hospital yesterday received the personal greeting of the

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King and Queen of England, with a card bearing the portraits of the Sovereigns and their good wishes, besides a facsimile of the King's handwriting.

On each photograph is written: "God keep you and bring you home safe and sound."

On those for the wounded are the words: "May you soon be well again."

Besides this the soldiers have received Christmas plum puddings.

It is a touching manifestation of the complete union that exists between the King and his people before the threats of the enemy and the trials of the most terrible of wars.

We all put our trust in our armies and send over our most ardent greetings to those who watch over the safety of France.

May the coming year see them safely restored to their homes!

Tuesday: 29th.

At last I have a peaceful moment to sit down and recount my adventures of Christmas week.

On the 22nd, through the kindness of General Allenby, I had one of the greatest joys of my life. He offered me a car to take me to Paris and then to Rheims, where I might arrange to see Amaury. It did not take long to pack my bag, and I started in Captain Capel's car, driven by a Parisian ex-jeweller, his chauffeur. Captain Capel and Lieutenant Pinto asked permission to accompany me to Paris.

When passing through the village of Croisettes, near St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, I stopped a few minutes to see my nephew, Renauld. As I went back to the car I saw a crowd round it. Boy Capel was already seated by the chauffeur, smoking his pipe, with an expression on his face that aroused my suspicions. Lieutenant Pinto and I, before getting into the car, tried to fathom the reason for the villagers' curiosity. At last we discovered on the back of the car, which was thick with dust, that the wretched boy had written with his finger, "Honeymoon!" *I* was the joke of the village!

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Capel, though of a most solemn and serious appearance, cannot resist a joke, good or bad.

The 23rd was passed trying to get permits from the French authorities to go as far as Rheims. The passport office is in the old convent of the Sacré Cœur, Boulevard des Invalides. If permission is difficult to get, and not always very graciously given, one can excuse it when one thinks of the responsibility entailed. I addressed myself directly to Commandant Dislere, Head of the Passport Office, who is a sailor. I have often noticed in France that the Navy is far more accessible to feminine charm than the Army, and less strict in giving passes. I was not surprised, therefore, to be most charmingly received, but Commandant Dislere told me that his power went no farther than Epernay, and that from there I should have to arrange things for myself. He said that Colonel Domenech is Governor of Epernay, and that I should have to soften his heart. Furnished with safe conducts to Epernay, I left Paris on the 24th, and towards noon arrived at Epernay.

Colonel Domenech has his offices in an old house that is typically provincial. He had been a former comrade at Saint-Cyr of my brother Felix, and received me in a very charming way, but said that it would be impossible to give the safe conduct to Rheims without consulting General Rouquerol, who is Governor of that town. He was expected at the office at three o'clock, and I was asked to wait. There was nothing to do but accept it philosophically, warming my feet at the stove as I sat there, while the Colonel sorted his papers and wrote letters. I ventured one or two questions on General Rouquerol in order to prepare my tactics. The Colonel did not disguise the fact that in time of war he was a somewhat "tough proposition" and by no means susceptible to female wiles!

At last, at three o'clock, steps and voices announced the arrival of General Rouquerol and his orderly officer. After a quick exchange of words relating to military matters, the Colonel mentioned my name and titles and left me to explain my case. I saw at once sentiment was no use here, so I said briskly:

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"General, since the beginning of the war I have been on the British front, and I come now to ask you, not a favour, but advice. In return for one or two little services I have been able to render him, the General commanding the British Cavalry Corps has given me a car and an army chauffeur to enable me to see my son, liaison officer to the 102nd Brigade of Infantry. If I go back without seeing him I fear the *Entente Cordiale* may suffer! What must I do?"

General Rouquerol looked me up and down and then said, very coolly, to the Colonel and his aide-de-camp:

"You are both witnesses of what the Baroness de La Grange asks me. Her reasons are good; but I will only allow her to go to Rheims if you bear witness—for the benefit of her family—to the fact that I take no responsibility!"

This said, he signed the safe conduct, and I got back into the car. It was now four o'clock. The roads were very bad, and it was impossible to go quickly, both for that reason and because of the number of convoys on the way. Thus it was pitch dark when we entered Rheims. General Rouquerol had told me that the only possible place to stay was a little hotel near the station, so I drove straight there. A voice from within asked me what I wanted.

"Have you a room?"

"A room, madame? They are all empty!"

"What, not a single traveller?" I said.

And so we chatted till I got information as to how I could let Amaury know I was there. The office to which I had to apply was outside the town, and it meant some wandering among the ruins. Sometimes the car collided with a heap of débris and we were obliged to go back. The faint moonlight showed the road and the famished dogs devouring the miscellaneous and horrible refuse of a half-ruined town.

At last we discovered the office, and I was received by a gendarme. He opened a door, and I found myself face to face with an officer who seemed greatly surprised to see me there! He was able to give me information at once as to the position of the 102nd Brigade. It was

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in the trenches, about six miles to the north-east of Rheims. A liaison officer had to carry despatches in that direction very early next morning, and the officer invited me to sit down and write a note to my son telling him where I was staying. Fearing that perhaps military discipline would not permit his answering a sentimental appeal from his mother, I tried to write in such a way as to make the letter seem one of business, coming from his lawyer, a letter that he could show to his chief. I put this harmless forgery into an envelope, gave it to the officer, and went back to the town. The inn-keeper was awaiting me anxiously, because, he said, by moonlight a bombardment was very probable. He offered to show me the way to the cellar; however, in the event of a 380 falling on that jerry-built place, the garret was as safe as any cellar, so I went to the room I had already chosen. It was terribly cold. I asked the man to shut the windows, and then saw every pane of glass had gone!

"Could I have a little fire?"

He raised his hands to heaven at the very thought.

"A fire? Impossible! We should be dropped upon at once!"

He seemed to regard me as some sort of Rip Van Winkle after this—did I know there was a war on? Not to know that at six miles from the lines a column of smoke could draw fire upon one! So, resigning myself, I put all the coverings I could find—my own rug, the motor rugs, and some I found in the other rooms of the hotel—on my bed, with my fur coat on top. In this way I was able to stand the many degrees of frost registered outside, and really did not sleep so badly.

My toilet next morning (the 25th) was casual, and after drinking a cup of coffee, I had to possess my soul in patience and just wait! When, by ten o'clock, like Sister Anne, I still saw no one coming, I began to despair. The night had been pretty quiet, though in the morning there had been shells on other parts of the town. Our part, near the station, is no longer of interest to the enemy, as there is no station left!

About half-past ten I heard a step, and my heart beat

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like a crazy clock. The door opened, and Amaury's tall figure appeared. We were both greatly affected; at first I could not speak. He then told me how he got my letter. He is on very good terms with his Brigadier-General, Leleu. He showed him the letter, saying it was really from me, and not the lawyer. There were two ways of answering, he said to General Leleu, either to go and see me, or to send word that I must return to Paris. The General, in a fatherly way, decided to let him go, but suddenly he said to Amaury: "But how the devil did your mother get to Rheims?"

"That's very simple, sir," replied Amaury; "if ever we get to Berlin she'll be there forty-eight hours before us!"

Amaury told me he had a narrow escape one day when on patrol duty and mounted on his brave mare, "Face." Crossing a field in which the farmer, fearing rain, had stacked the corn in small bundles, and thinking the place was safe, Amaury walked his horse quietly. Suddenly a German soldier sprang from behind one of the stacks and pointed his revolver straight at Amaury. Amaury's revolver being in its case, he saw he would have no time to get it out, and, acting quickly, he took his sword from the scabbard and plunged the blade in the enemy's body before he had time to realize what was happening. Then, seeing the German sink to the ground, he rode away at full gallop to rejoin his men, without once looking behind to see if the German had recovered. I asked him what his impression was, and he answered that it seemed as easy to pierce a man as a roll of butter. But he added that he did not like putting his sword back into the scabbard without his orderly cleaning it beforehand!

We spoke of Miss Sloane, and I told him she had written to me giving some news. He asks me to receive her kindly at La Motte au Bois if she wants to come, and I understood!

We had so much to say to each other after these five cruel months of separation, and yet we seemed to have nothing to say, so great was our joy at being together. But, alas! that very day Amaury had his orders to

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accompany the General to another Brigade—this meant our saying good-bye to each other at midday.

The moment came, and I felt I could hardly walk downstairs, but our respective duties called us different ways. I suggested that I should stay another day and see him again, but he made me understand very gently how dangerous the road was for him, and, of course, I could never forgive myself if harm came to him through my fault. He said, too, he could have no peace if the town were bombarded and he knew I was still there.

So I watched him drive away through the ruined streets in a little army car, and, feeling very wretched, I went back to my dull room and seized my small luggage as though the hotel itself were about to fall to pieces. I had to resist the passionate desire to see him again and be considered a lunatic for my weakness.

My jeweller-chauffeur, not at all anxious to prolong our visit, started off as quickly as possible, and this time, by daylight, we went through the streets of martyred Rheims. We made a détour to see the cathedral; I got out to look at the statue of Joan of Arc, still standing intact and proud, defying the enemy, while the mutilated church and the bishop's palace, in ruins, seemed to bow before her.

At Epernay I stopped for a few minutes to tell Colonel Domenech my experiences; I begged him to thank General Rouquerol, and to say that this time, anyway, the enemy shells had disdained me. I had not heard till then why Amaury had left his platoon of cavalry to join the Brigade Staff. I knew how attached he was to the 4th Cuirassiers. But it appears that General Leleu, having noticed his work as a scout attached to his brigade, asked him to remain with him. It was an order and a sacrifice, for he loved his men as they loved him.

Somehow the thought that this Christmas Day has united us gives me a hope in Amaury's destiny. And what a curious Christmas Day I spent, when I think of it! What a contrast to the teaching of the Founder is the spirit of the time! "Peace and goodwill," alas! we are very far from it today!

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I spent two days in Paris to see my sister[1] and friends. It is odd how strange and little at home I felt.

On Sunday, the 27th, we got home, Lieutenant Pinto accompanying me, the car being laden with all sorts of parcels, large and small, to drop at various billets on our route. And so I am back again at the headquarters of the Cavalry Corps. My journey is the subject of conversation in our little world.

We have discovered two good musicians—French Territorials. It is a godsend for those of my guests who are fond of music. Under his uniform, Baron Eschasseriaux hides a very pretty talent as a pianist, and one of his friends, an architect from Rheims, sings well. I installed my two musicians at the Bechstein, which I have had carried into the hall, and concerts will now be the order of the evening!

Unfortunately one of our Generals is not fond of music. Like the famous Englishman, whose name I have forgotten, he regards it merely as "an unpleasant noise." General Allenby, who is a great tease, encourages the concerts to exasperate him, I think! One day it appears the music-hater even threw an inkpot across his study, which adjoins our concert hall, with unfortunate results to my walls.

Nothing amuses General Allenby so much as to see poor Baron Eschasseriaux change his pail and broom for the ivory keyboard. The General always says when he has seen him on the road:

"Well, Baroness, I saw your 'artiste' puddling the mud just now!"

The services of my nephew Odon de Lubersac are highly appreciated by General Allenby. By intelligent, and sometimes audacious, expeditions along the front line, he gives to the Staff very interesting references about plans made in view of an attack that it was hoped would open a way to Lille.

Lubersac, a great friend of Boy Capel, with whom he loves to tease Lord Titchfield, had yesterday evening a brain wave. He put two rabbits in the springs of poor

[1] The Marquise de Lubersac.

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Titchfield's bed, giving them a good provision of cabbage and salad. In the morning, after a noisy night, Titchfield asked my nephew to inform me of the presence of rats in his springs, so as to allow me to put traps as soon as possible. But the orderly, in doing the bed, discovered the cabbage left for the next night—the rabbits having been liberated for the day—and as a Tommy is always a very intelligent man, he concluded that cabbages were not the special food of rats!

An officer of the Staff still wore a little piece of black cloth behind the collar of his uniform, in commemoration of the old wig worn from 1690 to 1754 (a privilege of the Royal Welch Fusiliers). My lady's maid, who is a great deal more interested in the Staff officers and their orderlies than in myself, is very puzzled about this peculiarity, and says that no doubt the officer wears it in order to wipe his pen. For nothing would I try to contradict her: I find it such an elegant gesture for a warrior to wipe his pen behind his back!

Well, we are at the 31st of December today. I, too, am wiping my pen for the last time this year, hoping to have in 1915 less tragic events to write in my diaries!

December 2nd 1914.

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1915

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JANUARY, 1915

Friday: 1*st.*

A new year begins, on which hang the threads of thousands of human lives.

What will be their fate? Will the pride of the Kaiser continue to sacrifice so many men who might have done so much more for the greatness of Germany in their daily occupations than by agonizing in this bloody struggle?

Among these men are many worthy souls—of peaceful tendencies, who have been deceived in their belief that they are fighting a defensive war. They have been kept in ignorance of the infamous aggression which began it. Had they known that not one of the Allies would have made the first step, nor let loose so fearful a storm, they would hardly have marched away with the same faith and conviction.

Many of the prisoners are glad enough to be captured, after what they have suffered, and to find themselves in the Concentration Camps, where they get decent food and cigarettes—thanks to the generosity of their enemies.

The Germans say that, at the beginning of December, 1914, Germany had, apart from the Landsturm, three Army Corps, ready for departure at Berlin. In Hamburg, 60,000; Bremen, 30,000; Hanover, 40,000; Dusseldorf, 30,000; Cologne, 60,000; Coblenz, 30,000; Wiesbaden, 15,000; Mainz, 25,000; Metz, 30,000; Heidelberg, 15,000; Carlsruhe, 60,000; Strasbourg, 30,000; Friburg, 35,000; Stuttgart, 60,000; Ulm, 70,000; Munich, 60,000. Corps of lesser importance have been assembled in other provincial towns which bring the total of available troops up to about a million men.

One may add to this figure the new class, which consists also of about a million men. Some of these reserves, it seems, were sent last week to the Russian front.

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The French paper which gives this information says that Germany has not yet 70,000,000 inhabitants from the recruiting standpoint.

Recruiting possibilities are based on the maximum figure of 58,000,000 inhabitants. As even her immense war resources are not unlimited, the duration of her effort will be, in all probability, in inverse ratio to its intensity.

Bad weather continues to paralyze action on our front. Storms at sea are preventing French and British ships approaching the coasts to assist the advance of our troops in the region of the dunes.

The country of the Yser is transformed into a series of lakes and ponds of mud!

Saturday: 2nd.

We have been rather a small party here lately. Half the Staff got leave at Christmas, and the rest over the New Year.

The war, which everyone said would only last a few weeks, seems to have become a sort of unhappy permanency; one feels it might become habitual and last to all eternity.

Last night, to celebrate the New Year, I gave a grand dinner to all my guests who still remain, to try and make them think they were at home. Champagne appeared, and the lake supplied us with two fine carp.

What a good fellow General Allenby is! He never goes out on foot without stuffing his pockets with sweets and oranges. All the village children run after him, search his pockets, and feast. He has adopted two little refugees called Marthe and Sidonie. He has brought them dolls from London, and one day early in the week he met them out without the cherished dollies. When asked where they were, they said, tearfully, that their mother was keeping them as a "Sunday toy." The General took a hand of each, and, going to their home, said they must have the dollies every day, and if they got broken he would bring them others!

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Sunday: 3rd.

I hear that a new English Army is being formed at the rate of 30,000 men per week; it is now in training and will soon be at the disposal of General French.

Perhaps I shall have some of them as new guests, and I shall welcome them with joy. If these new recruits are up to the standard of the old ones, the front will receive a very considerable reinforcement.

The Germans no longer regard the British troops as negligible, and the support they afford us is great.

A telegram from Felix saying that he has at last realized his ambition and been sent to the front. In spite of his sixty-three years, he is now on active service! I still remember saying good-bye to him in 1870, when he had just finished his examinations for Saint-Cyr and had come to pay a visit to his family before enlisting in the infantry. He was eighteen then, and in 1871 he came home with the "Croix de Guerre" and the "Legion d'Honneur." If God spares him in this war some new and glorious ribbons will be added to those he won in 1870—at least, I hope so. He is the real type of French "poilu."

Monday: 4th.

In our dear Alsace, also a theatre for the heroism of our soldiers, they are overcoming, little by little, the resistance of the enemy on that soil that should always have remained French—a soil torn from us by the machinations of Bismarck!

Hearing of all these towns reconquered brings back my youth and memories of the Franco-Prussian War. I was then farther from the front, in Normandy, but the names of Alsace stuck in my mind, and I remember the refrain that I sang with the school children:

> "Never will Alsace and Lorraine be yours!
> In spite of you we are French for all time."

The welcome being given now, after forty years, to our troops, proves that the song did not exaggerate the feeling of our people.

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The day before yesterday I had a Mass celebrated for the repose of the souls of the British soldiers who have died in Flanders. The entire Staff was there.

A priest evacuated from Roubaix gave us an address, which was an admirable expression of the union of hearts in the face of Death and Sacrifice.

The little village church looked very picturesque, filled with khaki figures and the flags that I had placed around the altar. Near the statue of Joan of Arc I had put the Union Jack, to demonstrate the brotherhood of arms, emphasized by the fine phrases of the priest. And I was careful to hang above the statue the Tricolour. During the service I could not help thinking of the curious circumstances which make it possible to place the Union Jack at the feet of the French heroine, who, in her time, did not hesitate to chase away the English. But now her flag mingles harmoniously with that of the Allies.

The priest quoted some fine verses of Victor Hugo, and I copy here his address, which, accompanied by the boom of cannon, impressed us all very much.

Address given in the Church at la Motte au Bois, 2nd January, 1915

Allow me to begin by rendering homage to the patriotic feelings of the Baroness de La Grange, who, in a spirit of Christian love, wishes, by her prayers and those of the Church, to repay a part of her debt of gratitude to the victorious bravery of the allied armies. These have, in fact, stopped the enemy on the very threshold of her home, and watered the soil of her domain with their generous blood. Her patriotism has already the satisfaction of having given her son as a soldier, one who, from the first day of the war, has fought in the French Army, where he is a distinguished, beloved, and appreciated leader. To her honour she gives another witness today of her love for her country in giving up her house to the service of the General Staff of the English cavalry, which finds here a gracious hospitality and all the comfort possible in war time. For what she does for the country, and for our dead

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soldiers, she will accept the gratitude of her fellow-countrymen, of those who are no more, and of the families who mourn them.

I must salute, too, with respect and admiration, the English and French Generals and officers who, in the most generous and magnanimous spirit of harmony and tolerance, have come here to unite all that they have in common of faith, hope, and gratitude. All of us here believe in the meaning of Life and Death, in the fact of an Intelligence, a Justice, an infinite Love accompanying us through all the trials to which we are subjected, without understanding the reason.

This belief gives us hope in the face of death, and convinces us that the terrible destruction of the sentient being is not really annihilation; that our life is not a brutal trap into which we have been thrust against our desire, to meet there with undeserved punishment. It is a belief which, in the hour of greatest danger can ask for help—knowing, feeling that the universe is not an implacable, blind mechanism, a wheel which sooner or later must break us.

It is a belief which allows the soldier, dying far from parents, wife, and child, to say: "Someone thinks of me with love and pity." And for those loved ones there is the knowledge that the dead who live in the thoughts of the living have still a tie with them.

No, we feel there are necessary laws, leaving us a certain liberty, and even indulgence, and because we have this belief—which is simply the belief in God—we can pray.

Yes, this belief which makes us wish to pray, is common to us all, and if any one of us still doubts, the wisest thing to do is to follow the example, and most logical counsel, of Pascal, who said:

"Let us examine the point. 'God is'—or, 'He is not.' Reason can do nothing here. If God is, let us pray to Him. If He is not, still let us pray to Him. We risk nothing. Which amounts to the same thing as was said by one of the poets:

'If Heaven be void, then is there done no ill.
If there be One to hear our cry, His mercy may be ours.'"

This belief is not ours exclusively. It is that of all our Allied peoples. When the first tocsin call rang

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out, what was the first instinctive movement of mothers and wives—in England, in Belgium, in Russia, or in France? It was to go to the House of God, to implore with artless piety in one great outburst of the soul of sad humanity the help of our Father. And to whom should they pray for strength to make the sacrifice required if not to the sacrifice on Calvary?

Sons followed their mothers, and husbands their wives. Uniforms and dark robes mingled in our ancient churches—Catholic and Protestant alike. They are the gathering places of all devotion hungry for hope, of all distress thirsty for consolation. United as we are by the same belief, which gives us the power to pray, we share the same hope. Hope, that supreme consolation of hearts torn by the thought of the too-early grave of father, son, brother, sweetheart. This belief makes us hope that the heroism of their death will be their best plea before God.

We have the right to believe that when a soldier who is a believer gives his life in a just war, doing his duty to his country, which is also his duty to God, his salvation is assured.

Christ has said: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in Me shall have everlasting Life."

Our soldiers are believers. Many proved it before they left, and still more in the face of the enemy and in the trenches.

We have the hope then of their salvation, and the assurance of finding them again in the glory and peace of God. There is the hope, too, that their noble example will stir up others to do the same. There is hope for their families, surrounded by the sympathy of that great national family, which makes distress and misery easier to bear. There is hope for the native land which is saved by their deaths.

> "Behold the tombs where Thy warm blood flows,
> O Natal Land, honour the dead who gave you Life!"

There is hope of a well-deserved glory whose memory will prove a precious inheritance for the admiration and imitation of future generations. On our flags, in letters of gold, will be found their names, under those of the Marne and the Aisne.

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"Yea, among fair names is theirs the fairest.
What glory beside theirs will not pass and fade?
As a mother crooning to her child
Will the voice of a people whisper round their Tomb."

The heroic and Christian death of our dear soldiers, fallen in defence of Right, Justice, Honour, and Weakness Oppressed, allows us to hope that in heaven they will not be less useful defenders for us, obtaining that divine help to win the final triumph in the cause for which they shed their blood. In his immortal "Iliad," Homer, that great man, tells us:

"How the Gods of Old—powerful phantoms from the heights of Mount Olympus—
Came upon Earth, to be the Sword and Buckler of the Warriors of Greece."

In the Apocrypha, too, we hear how the valiant captain, Judas Maccabees, offered burnt offerings and thanksgivings for the freedom of Israel.

Today, my friends, we find ourselves doing the same thing two thousand years after. We are met here in gratitude to those soldiers sacrificed on the altar of patriotism. All generations, all peoples, all religions, have fulfilled this duty, so well expressed by Victor Hugo:

"They who have died for their native land
Merit the prayers of the People at their tomb."

Let us pray, then, and to give form to our prayer we may use the words of a contemporary writer who expresses our confidence in our dear dead, and their power of intercession.

PRAYER

Spirits of the great dead, hear our supplications! Remain with our soldiers. Comfort them if hearts fail, and they lose faith. Forsake them not. Come to us, O ye great soldier heroes who have passed on, to help us in our days to come.

A multitude of evil men would take from us anew the soil ye have redeemed with your blood. Injustice and death reign over the land. Inspire our great chiefs who lead us. Help us till the day when a righteous Vengeance may bring Freedom, and Justice may triumph!

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This priest, whom the strange chances of war have brought to us as a refugee, has had many wanderings. By order of the Mayor of Roubaix he left that town, his two assistant priests, and his duties. Arrived at Dunkirk with 8,000 of his fellow-citizens, he remained with them for some time, camped in sheds. They were at last embarked for an unknown destination. After forty-eight hours at sea—spent lying on deck—they entered Cherbourg Harbour. There the ship was greeted with salvos of guns, and cheers which touched them in their distress. When, however, it was discovered they were refugees and not British troops, as was at first imagined, the satisfaction was not so great! They were disembarked at night and entrained again, and for four or five days they travelled, with very little food, and finally reached St. Lo (Calvados), where they were allowed to disperse and find homes as best they could. A fortnight later, when some of them were beginning to make a living, they again received orders to move on. Once more the poor things found themselves travelling for days by train. Sometimes they were held up for hours outside the stations, when they shared their scanty bread, shivering in the damp night air.

One fine day their tired eyes opened to read that they were at Sarlat, Dordogne! There they were told to do the best they could for themselves. The unfortunate people had some terrible weeks there, and then they were again taken to the north with the promise of being sent home. They were returning happy only to learn that Roubaix was still in the hands of the Germans, and that there was no human possibility of their being able to return to their homes then. So after all those crazy wanderings, they found themselves once more at the very gates of home, and as much exiles as at Sarlat! Our poor priest had not even a rug with him. He told me that his much darned "douillette"—the small cape worn by French priests—had served him as pillow on board ship, as well as during those long hours in the train.

Orders had arrived only to be countermanded, given

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again, and contradicted anew, till many of the wretched refugees—already perhaps in bad health—died on the way.

This story has horrified me very much, but, after all, it is only another proof that France was not prepared for war.

Sometimes, it appears, hundreds of refugees are notified to the officials of a town as arriving at a specified time from a particular place, and before anyone has had time to do anything a thousand will swarm into the town from another direction, quite unannounced! There is not a corner left for those who arrive later and no food, so that there remains no choice for the unlucky and half-distracted authorities but to send them on somewhere else as quickly as possible.

Wednesday: 6*th.*

It seems that the *Frankfort Gazette* admits that the Germans have captured such enormous quantities of goods—merchandise of all sorts—that they are at their wits' end to know what to do with the booty! They are requisitioning every sort of shed and storehouse, and it is proposed to divide the loot up throughout the length and breadth of their empire! Embarrassing thefts, evidently!

Let us hope that from their frames the portraits of our ancestors may pour malediction on the robbers, and that our old family silver on touching their lips may make them sick!

Monday: 11*th.*

During the night there was a terrible explosion which seemed to come from Lille, and we are anxiously awaiting news. There must be many victims. One freezes with horror when one thinks of the *miles* of munitions accumulated along our roads just now, and that any bomb casually dropped from an aeroplane may blow them all up.

Tuesday: 12*th.*

Today Monsieur Poincaré, President of the Republic, has been at Hazebrouck, and was received by the

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Mayor, l'Abbé Lemire, and all the civil and military authorities. Having no official status, I did not go. The President came from Nieuport, where he had reviewed those fine troops—our Marine gunners.

It appears to be confirmed that, just before the outbreak of war, the Emperor William asked the King of the Belgians for a free passage for his army, to allow it to occupy Ostend and Antwerp—promising to withdraw after having completely crushed England and France. The noble loyalty of King Albert and the Belgian people refused to agree; their choice was quickly made. and the enemy's offers refused.

Friday: 15*th.*

The explosion occurred beyond our lines, probably in Lille. It was heard in Holland! They say it was a German munition depôt at the gates of Lille. I trust the only victims were those responsible for the munitions being there.

Sunday: 17*th.*

Amaury tells me that Miss Sloane has become a true business woman. She works all day at her office in New York, where she collects funds for our French soldiers, and with this money sends over large consignments of clothes and first-aid outfits. He says she receives about a thousand dollars a day.

Tuesday: 19*th.*

There has been a Zeppelin raid on England.

The air-ships flew over Yarmouth, on the coast of Norfolk.

They went towards the North as far as Sandringham, the Royal residence, but by God's providence the Sovereigns had left it a few hours before.

What a charming little manifestation on the part of a cousin (germain)!

Wednesday: 20*th.*

Amaury writes and says he is living in a wood. His dwelling is a wooden hut far underground. There is

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no air, he says, but at any rate he is under shelter, and would be very comfortable if he could light a fire, for it is terribly cold. There are five of these cabins, united by deep trenches, making quite a little underground village.

Friday: 22nd.

A letter from Miss Sloane in which she tells me of the work she is doing for our soldiers, and asks for information to help her to try and change public opinion in America, which is not always very favourable to us. She seems very much moved by our sufferings, and wants to interest her compatriots in our fate.

Sunday: 24th.

The Germans have dropped eighty bombs on the peaceful town of Dunkirk.

There have been twenty-five victims—nine killed and sixteen wounded.

The population remained calm.

If Germany imagines that she is going to terrorize the civilians of the country she is wrong!

Everyone has someone belonging to them at the front and takes a certain satisfaction in sharing their dangers.

Wednesday: 27th.

On Sunday my sister sent me a visitor in the person of Prince Poniatowski. He is in the French Mission, attached to the British Army, and billeted at Merville. He told me that a big German attack on the La Bassée front is expected. The news has been brought in by a deserter. Béthune is going to be bombarded. There is another of our lovely little northern towns likely to be destroyed. I feel as though I were watching at the deathbed of old friends! We used to go by Béthune every time we went to the Bryas, when the children acted in private theatricals.

Prince Poniatowski told me of a fine instance of his son's pluck and initiative. The boy, who is only

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eighteen, had enrolled as a motor driver in a Brigade Staff. Opposite the French trenches, at an equal distance between them and the enemy, a Rolls-Royce car has had to be abandoned, with the bodies of the men killed inside it. For three months the car remained there—both sides being careful not to damage it—but neither succeeding in capturing it. One very dark night young Poniatowski took four horses, wrapped their hoofs in clothes to deaden the noise, and accompanied by men as resolute as himself, they went across, harnessed the horses to the car, and brought it back to our lines. When dawn broke the Germans saw that their adversaries had won the trick! The remains of Captain Anderson and his dead companions were piously buried. This happened in the early days of the war, but the Staff still has the car!

Another time, during a retreat, he lost his way and was attacked by a German sentinel with a bayonet. Without losing his head he drew out a small Browning and shot the man dead, getting home safely, with only a slight wound.

Thursday: 28*th.*

A very interesting letter from Amaury. He says that the present war is not a war between Germany and France, nor between Germany and Russia, but between Germany and England. It is the natural result of the race for the world's markets. This last is a decisive phase of the battle between the two imperialist nations, England and Germany. If we were beaten we would not lose an inch of territory, and if today we agreed to sign the peace Alsace and Lorraine would probably be given back to us. What Germany wants—and her peace propositions prove this—is the annihilation of British naval supremacy. It is not France who prevents the expansion of Germany, but England. It is not our commercial ships who on all the oceans compete with hers; it is those of Great Britain. England's stake is therefore higher than ours.

Suppose we were beaten, we would continue to exist,

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because we live on our own production; but England, beaten, dies. She is running at the moment far greater risks than when Napoleon massed his troops at Boulogne. Nevertheless, what did she not do to stop him? Waterloo cost her an effort lasting fifteen years, and how much money! To conquer there, it was necessary for Wellington to make war during twelve years in Spain, wearing out the French army by a war of constant skirmishes. And before attacking the Emperor himself, the Iron Duke had first to beat Junot and Soult, beginning with inferiors. Although the Emperor was a formidable champion because he had genius, he had not got what the Kaiser has—an entire population which is nothing but a vast machine of war, the work of thirty years of organization. When one considers all this one is convinced that England cannot make too great an attempt to crush Germany. She understands this herself now that the Zeppelins have raided her coasts. But the English will never be able to make an effort equal to ours. To measure that which we provide one must remember that for forty years our men have succeeded each other under the flag, and taxes have been levied for this purpose. England improvises where we have laboriously constructed.

Friday: 29th.

The Germans have engaged in sea-fighting, putting their *Derflinger*, *Moltke*, *Blücher*, and others against the *Indomitable* and the destroyers *Meteor*, *Liberty*, etc.

At one time it seemed as if the Germans were gaining the upper hand, but results prove now that our Allies have still the mastery of the seas. We are reassured as to the safety of our ports—except that the submarines are always hovering about.

Thanks, however, to our united fleets, which exercise constant watchfulness, we do not greatly fear surprises in that quarter.

I am impatiently waiting details of the naval engagements.

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Saturday: 30th.

The rumour runs that the Crown Prince has said the French and the Russians alone are guilty of helping the English in their "filthy task." They are particularly enraged against the English, and especially since the increase of the miserable little army, "the Contemptibles" of the Kaiser, which represented Britain at the beginning of the war! The fact is, from what I have seen myself in my "zone," the British Lion is not at all drowsy! On the contrary, he is gathering together his forces for that moment when with extended claws he will spring upon his enemy!

I sent Amaury this curiosity:

J O F	F R E	K A I	S E R
F R E	N C H	S E R	V I A

In reply to his thesis on the causes of the war I tell him that if the English and German Governments have a commercial outlook, in the necessity of the conflict (and this has never been proved), at any rate the spontaneous enthusiasm of men of all classes, and in all situations, an enthusiasm which showed itself in the rush to the recruiting offices, that were inadequate in number to meet the demand of all those who voluntarily enlisted, was an absolutely disinterested popular movement—and the result of indignation provoked by the violation of the neutrality of Belgian territory.

This enthusiasm will, I am convinced, be the means of supplying us with the contingents necessary for the final victory. Living as I do in the midst of British officers, I am continually struck by the admiration they have for the French Army, and their confidence in our command. And I am sure that no feeling of false pride on their part would prevent them from taking our advice and guidance, which already they seek incessantly at the French General Headquarters. I have proof of this, in the request that several British officers have made me, knowing me to be a friend. They want some information on the question of setting mines, a subject on which Amaury has specialized in his sector in Champagne.

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Sunday: 31*st.*

Amaury writes and tells me he was nominated Lieutenant on the 22nd of this month, with a magnificent citation.

He adds that an additional star on his tunic does not go to prove that he is any more intelligent or capable.

These sentiments seem rather socialistic to me, and I should be uneasy, if I were not sure that he has been brought up to think the right way.

FEBRUARY, 1915

Monday: 1*st.*

Captain Paget, on the Staff of the 1st Cavalry Corps, brought me a communiqué from the Staff, containing the account given by a prisoner, an officer escaped from Crefeld, of his experiences there. His story has been told before the King of England, Lord Kitchener, and Sir Edward Grey. Here is the prisoner's account:

"Taken prisoner the 30th October when wounded in the leg. Kicked on the wound, and forced to march six miles until he dropped from fatigue. Fifty-two officers and men were huddled together in a cattle truck a foot deep in liquid manure. They were shut in there for forty-eight hours without air or light, their eyes being cruelly affected by ammonia fumes, this costing the eyesight for life of one young officer.

"They arrived at Crefeld on the 18th November. During the journey there he was repeatedly thrown out of the truck, insulted by the officers, and then kicked back again. The prisoners were deprived of their coats and tunics and were starving and verminous.

"There were 450 officers at Crefeld—200 Russians, 100 French, 150 English. In the coffee given them was a drug which prevented sleep. The windows of the prison were nailed up and whitewashed to prevent the entrance of air and sunlight."

The escaped officer recounted that, during his flight, he noticed that civilians appeared to be downcast. By

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Government orders flags were flown and bells rung to keep up the spirits of the people.

The prisoners were not permitted to write home for food or warm clothing.

Tuesday: 2nd.

Felix has left Champagne to go towards the north, after having spent some weeks in the inferno of Verdun. Now he is next to the British Army, and I hope to have a chance of seeing him. He speaks with enthusiasm of the bravery of his men, nearly all from the Basque country.

To hear him talk you might imagine that with the exercise of a little ingenuity, a trench may be transformed into a sort of Arabian Nights' palace. And he insists that he has never been better than when commanding a subterranean post.

Wednesday: 3rd.

The English have had a great success at La Bassée, where, after vigorous attacks, they advanced a mile.

It seems that at the defence of Ypres of the 1st British Corps, comprising 40,000 men, only 4,000 returned!

Our line from the sea to La Bassée has facing it fourteen enemy Army Corps, and they continue to come!

Thursday: 4th.

Amaury says he is performing prodigies of invention in order to send bombs into the German trenches, which are 27 metres distant from his own. For this he uses a little catapult cannon which he had specially made for the purpose.

Monday: 8th.

In my maternal solicitude I was weak enough to send Amaury the names of two or three German families I knew before the war, to whom he could appeal if he were taken prisoner, and who would give me news of him. But Amaury replies indignantly that he hopes, instead of being taken prisoner, to make a triumphal

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entry into Berlin, and to have the pleasure of burning the castles of all our one-time friends. How ferocious the war renders even the most peaceful of us!

Sunday: 14*th.*

The English are taking vengeance for the raids on their island.

Thirty-four aeroplanes and hydroplanes have attacked Bruges, Zeebrugge, Blankenberghe, and Ostend, with the object of preventing the development of a German submarine base.

It is sad, but unavoidable in the national defence, that Belgian civilians run the risk of becoming victims, too.

The Allies are taking the greatest precautions against this risk, but it is impossible to allow the enemy to profit by Allied chivalry as they did in 1914, when they forced women and children to march in front of them during the first days of the invasion, hoping thus to break our resistance.

Monday: 15*th.*

The authorities have decided that all civilians lodging troops are to be paid one franc a day for each officer, fifty centimes for non-commissioned officers, and five centimes for soldiers. I calculate that in this way I could make a fortune of twenty-five francs a day. Which would be hardly enough to pay for the brooms necessary for the daily cleaning occasioned by dirty boots, or by the coal hoarded by orderlies in the four corners of the rooms—that is, when not in wardrobes—so as to avoid the bother of going each time to fetch it. But, in spite of this, I think it is more dignified to refuse this indemnity, which would put me on equal terms with a boarding-house!

Wednesday: 17*th.*

The Duc de Chevreuse came to see me today. He is the son of my old friend the Duc de Luynes. I wanted to do all I could to make his visit agreeable, so I asked him what he would most like. He said more than any-

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thing he wanted a hot bath, for where he is billeted this is an unattainable luxury. Entertaining is very easy in time of war, since with a little water one can make one's guests happy!

Saturday: 20*th.*

The Prince of Wales has been seen passing through Hazebrouck. His car had three large holes in it! It is very evident that he is sharing to the full the dangers of his fellow-countrymen.

The second month of the year is passing. I have many visits—a very international society indeed. My table, which I try to render as hospitable as possible, is often surrounded by a varied crowd of uniforms—in fact, all the Allied Armies are sometimes represented. Housekeeping, from the commissariat point of view, is often difficult, but fortunately the desire for gain has kept many tradesmen in the country, and even during the most terrible bombardments by those awful shells, the '380's, one still sees certain butchers and bakers and grocers open till the day when there comes a big shell which lays the house out flat!

When the bombardment begins the shopkeeper and the customer stop business and go down to the cellar in friendly fashion. Certain observant people, remarking the more or less regular intervals of attack, rush up during the twelve minutes or so of respite, and, anxiously watching the clock, cut off a leg of mutton or weigh out a pound of coffee!

Among the Belgian officers who often come to share our war-time meals is the Duc d'Ursel—a Senator in peace time. He knew the old King Leopold very well, and some of his stories about him are most amusing. One of them recounts how a Radical-Socialist Deputy, a doctor by profession, said one day to the King: "Sire, what a pity it is you are *King*, and not *President* of the Republic!"

The King, with his subtle smile and drawling voice, replied: "My dear doctor, it is just the same thing as if I suggested that you would be much better as a 'vet'!"

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Another time a certain man, with no knowledge of court etiquette, was presented to the King. The man held out his hand first. The King, who was punctilious in matters of etiquette, put his stick into the outstretched hand and made the unfortunate individual hold it to the end of the interview. As the King returned to his private apartments, leaning on the stick, he remarked to his A.D.C.: "I don't think he will do it again!"

The English officer who brought the Duc d'Ursel here told us that the First British Corps, commanded by General Sir Douglas Haig, has held the trenches at Ypres and Messines for ten days, with a proportion of one man to eight or ten Germans.

On one brilliant moonlight night—a lonely farm by the roadside flaming like a torch meanwhile—the British saw the enemy advancing in close formation, in platoons of sixty men, one behind the other. At some 150 yards the British opened fire and wiped out the audacious enemy to the last man, as one after another the platoons appeared. The officer telling us the story said he was lost in admiration at the bravery of the men advancing with the goose-step, opposing bayonets to cannon in that theatrical setting of moonlight and blazing farm. But as the last lot approached and were up almost to the trenches this time, they flung up their arms. Just behind them was a machine-gun, which explains a certain amount of apparent German heroism!

Tuesday: 23rd.

I have here a charming English General (General Longmore), with whom I like to talk of the family. He has told me about his own. He has a daughter aged sixteen, who in April is to have a little brother or sister. The General and I went together to choose lace garments for the layette. I gave him a baby's bonnet, which he put on his hand to examine, and it was amusing to see this old soldier from India and the Transvaal handling the bonnet with all the delicacy that a gentle nature can put into a huge fist. As private telegrams for those at the front come on by post, General Longmore asked

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me if the telegram announcing the birth of the baby could be sent to me. He wants a boy. May Heaven grant his wish!

The air raids over England are continuing. Yesterday an aeroplane flew over the county of Essex, dropping incendiary bombs near Braintree and at Colchester. There was material damage, but no loss of life. It has needed Zeppelins and aeroplanes to show the English that their island is no longer in greater security than the Continent.

Wednesday: 24th.

A car belonging to the French Mission took me as far as Béthune, where I met Felix. We lunched together at the hotel. The old poilu is delighted with life. He has two good horses and a splendid battalion of boys from Landes and Limousin. They are first-class trench diggers. Felix has applied his architectural talents to the building of his trenches, which are a veritable Bastille. He has under his orders his hairdresser and his dentist. What more can one want for comfort in the trenches? . . .

A Zeppelin has bombarded the railway, St. Omer-Hazebrouck-Dunkirk, and flown over Calais, where it dropped several bombs. There were four victims, and a house cut clean in two, as if by a knife.

On the roof of a partly demolished building was found a pennant in the German colours, a sewn-up bag, and a letter. They were handed to the Governor of the place.

Thursday: 25th.

A terrible lack of munitions is being felt in the Allied armies, and is costing many lives. I know of one British officer who, at the beginning of this year, went to his Brigade Staff and said: "We have three shells today. Where shall we send them?"

There is a lot of talk just now about capturing German submarines by a new English invention. It seems that it consists of fine steel nets which catch the propellers of the submarines, the boat dips and sinks to the bottom, unable to regain the surface. A few bubbles above is all

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COMMANDANT DE CHAUMONT-QUITRY, WHO FOUGHT IN THE WAR OF 1870. REJOINED IN THE WAR OF 1914
Sixty-three years old.

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that denotes the end of this grim drama. And a few more human lives are ended under the inexorable ocean!

One wonders if these unfortunates curse the Kaiser and his pride—or do they cherish in their hearts the hope that a greater Germany will spring from their deaths? Do they die happy or with rage in their hearts as at a useless sacrifice? Who knows?

Friday: 26th.

In a general circular to the local authorities, the German Minister of Home Affairs (Home Secretary) calls their attention to the fact that it is advisable to make large provisions of pickled meat.

By pickling pork especially, they will save vast quantities of the potatoes required as food for pigs, which should be kept for human consumption.

So the order goes forth that a million piggies are to be slaughtered forthwith!

Provisions must be getting scarce if the pig's rations are to appear on the table for Fritz and Gretchen. And while they slay the pigs the bombardment on the Dardanelles continues—thus the news from the different fronts!

Saturday: 27th.

Amaury writes to me that he has ordered a pair of new red trousers from his tailor. This seems prehistoric to me somehow!

What is painful at the present time is the fact that the Russians have retreated.

The entrance of Roumania into the war is therefore delayed.

Sunday: 28th.

We learn from the papers that there is much activity on the Eastern front, and that the bombardment of the Dardanelles has begun again.

Effects of it are felt as far as Smyrna, and the emotion at Constantinople is very lively!

Three French cruisers—the *Suffren*, *Gaulois*, and the *Charlemagne*—took an active part in the struggle.

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Yesterday, while I was writing in my library, General Allenby came in, looking greatly worried and preoccupied. He confided to me that the Germans had mined a trench in which he had men of the Indian Cavalry. A lot of these had been blown up and killed. They were good troops, and it was a serious loss to him. He added that he knew the French have a new invention, the microphone, which enables the men in a trench to hear any mining operations going on against them. Knowing something of administrative work and the dreadful slowness of officialdom, I gave General Allenby some Machiavellian advice, which he followed, with the result that he obtained the new instruments at once.

Experiments were made in the park, and we were all invited to assist. Our part of the performance consisted in wriggling along, flat to the ground, in the sticky mud, and glueing our ears to the damp walls of the tunnel, which I had allowed them to hollow out in the park, through what we rather grandly call our "mountain," though it is really more like a mole-hill.

This little trick of mine to obtain the machines, very justifiable in my opinion, as it saves valuable lives (and "time is life" very often in these days), caused some annoyance in certain official quarters. I regret this annoyance, but feel glad to have done a good deed!

It has rained terribly this month—a constant deluge. The country is waterlogged. All the poor soldiers, giving marvellous proofs of endurance, are up to their waists in water. At first the Scottish regiment kept their kilts, but they have been found so unpractical that they have been abandoned when the soldiers are at the front. The tartans lost all their colour and were like khaki.

The Highland uniform, and the fine fellows in it, have a wonderful success with the fair sex!

Things seem quieter at the moment.

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MARCH, 1915

Tuesday: 2nd.

Several Zeppelins flew over Paris yesterday evening—just to prevent the Parisians from enjoying the first lovely night.

It was a sort of "dress rehearsal," I fear, for they are likely to return periodically to play the same tragedy, compelling the citizens to seek a nocturnal refuge in their cellars. The impression I receive when I visit the capital at the same time as these birds of ill-omen is really curious.

In the war zone, I never think of them; behind and out of the apparent danger zone, I am in a "blue funk." The lugubrious sound of the "sirens" (maroons), the firemen giving loud blasts on their trumpets—it all gets on my nerves and I rush down to the cellars with everyone else!

Under the old zinc roof of La Motte au Bois, when I hear the significant humming drone of those same night-birds, I snuggle under the bedclothes and say something to the effect of "Let 'em all come!"

After all, it is really pleasanter to die in a good bed on the second floor than to be suffocated in a cellar!

Friday: 5th.

Amaury writes to say how glad he is to be on a Brigade Staff. The one thing that relieves the boredom of his profession is the fighting. He has to be as close as possible to the enemy, and from his point of view he has no reason to complain, as he is within twenty-five yards.

He has in his brigade a number of miners from the north, who therefore dig excellent trenches. He tells me that when the ground is damp they have first to freeze it with a special apparatus and then dig in the ice, which represents a formidable work.

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Sunday: 7th.

The Germans are attacking Rheims more and more bitterly—doing their best to complete the destruction of the glorious cathedral.

More than 1,500 projectiles have already fallen on the town!

I shiver when I think that Amaury's brigade is so near, watching the sad spectacle, and that at any moment he may be ordered to within range of this intense bombardment.

American writers seem very optimistic at present. They express the opinion that there is now a likelihood of a decisive victory for the Allies.

We are honoured by this confidence!

Monday: 8th.

This morning there took place rather an amusing incident. One of my cousins, relying on the benevolence of the British Army towards the French, arrived here in the hopes of seeing her husband. She was unable to tell us where he was; all she knew was that he was in the neighbourhood of Vieux Berquin, quartered in an isolated farm. I decided that the best thing to do was to confide in the Staff officers, who were having their breakfast. General O'Keeffe,[1] who is a kind-hearted Irishman, cried: "I adore romance!" And forthwith he mounted his horse and rode away, followed at a respectful distance by a young captain on a polo pony. At lunch-time I went to see if there was any news and was told that the husband had been found and given orders to report at H.Q. No reason was given him, so he presented himself somewhat nervously. Brusquely General O'Keeffe said: "Go and see your wife!"

The romance was in full swing, until the French officer attached to the British Army, who had scented a breach of regulations, arrived in the room where we were all sitting. He asked the names of my guests. With an assurance of which I did not know myself capable, I named the husband and presented his wife under her maiden name. The subterfuge succeeded

[1] Now Major-General Sir M. W. O'Keeffe, K.C.M.G.

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admirably. For, if the regulations are severe for wives and mothers, another type of woman rejoices in complete liberty. The romance was uninterrupted until the good General O'Keeffe gave to the happy husband the signal to depart. Tomorrow, probably, they will not have such good luck!

Tuesday: 9th.

The Prefect of the Nord, M. Trépont, and his secretary, M. Boromée, have been arrested by the German military authorities for having opposed—or so it is said—the formation of a syndicate to facilitate the payment of war taxes imposed on the suburban communities.

M. Trépont and M. Boromée are under surveillance at the Hôtel de l'Europe.

Thursday: 11th.

The papers say that Germany is entering upon an era of economic difficulty. K.K. bread is being measured out in minute quantities; dieting is advised by the Faculty; restaurants being closed very early.

Starch is forbidden for shirts, as it is used in the making of bread.

All this good news cheers me up, for, as a matter of poetic justice in this world, the Germans, after having starved the Parisians in 1870, compelling them to eat rats and horse-meat, are themselves going to be rationed.

Friday: 12th.

Today I had the pleasure of having my brother Felix here. General Allenby, as a delicate attention, sent his car and an aide-de-camp to Sailly la Bourse, just behind the trenches, where my brother was resting, and Lieutenant Agnew, who was charged with the job, surprised him and carried him off.

I invited several of the Generals and the officers to celebrate the event of his visit, and we prepared an armchair of honour for him at table, over which the gardener had arranged a triumphal arch of laurel! Felix joined heartily in the fun, and the meal was very gay. But to hear him talk you would think life in the trenches has

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its charms! He said they lacked nothing, and the only thing he had to regret was the untimely arrival of a shell one day just when some particularly exquisite cheese was to add unusual enjoyment to a meal.

The British have been fighting between the Lys and La Bassée; they have taken Neuve Chapelle. The attack was well planned, and three lines of German trenches—800 metres deep and 3,000 to 5,000 metres long—were occupied successively by the British. In this attack they say the British lost many men and officers. A further plan was projected which consisted in leaving unoccupied a certain space in the centre of the trenches. Through this space the cavalry was to go across with the object of an attack on Lille. One squadron had already passed, when it was seen that five machine-guns, mounted in a lonely farm, were sweeping the road! There was no chance but immediate retreat to save the cavalry from being mown down. So they contented themselves with the advance already made and the gain which they had been able to keep.

One of the officers here tells me that someone had a brain-wave, and, thanks to his idea, the route to be followed by the attacking troops in passing from the support trenches to the front line was clearly picked out beforehand by white indicators—only on the side towards the Germans they were grey and invisible.

Saturday: 13*th.*

The English naval planes have attacked Ostend and thrown bombs on the repairing shops for the submarines and on the Kursaal, which is serving as headquarters for the German Army.

We contemplate with joy the emotion of the Herren officers, who detest being disturbed in their tranquillity!

Sunday: 14*th.*

An auxiliary British cruiser has been sunk. Four officers and twenty-two sailors were saved, but the rest of the crew perished.

This is a result of this horrible submarine warfare—a diabolical invention of the Germans.

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It is true that the germ of the idea came from our writer, Jules Verne.

Heavy German methods carry out ideas conceived by the subtlety of French imagination.

A laconic despatch in the papers announces that the Czar has arrived at the front.

It is said the Russians lack munitions and arms, and that certain regiments are going into action with nothing more than cudgels!

We seem to have returned to the times of the ancient Gauls!

Monday: 15*th.*

This morning General Allenby proposed going to see Ypres, which is being destroyed bit by bit by the continuous bombardment. In peace-time this pretty town was always one of our favourite excursions with our guests. I know—or knew—all its historic buildings, and felt a sentimental regret before getting there even at the thought of seeing them mutilated or destroyed.

We started in the car—General Allenby, Colonel Birch, and myself. An aide-de-camp sat in front with the chauffeur. Arriving at a village just outside Ypres we were stopped by a worthy French Territorial, who regarded us with an air of severe satisfaction—an air which plainly said: "At last I've got 'em!"

I demanded explanations. He refused even to look at our papers. We were, he said, the spies he had orders to arrest—a woman and three English officers! I insisted he was mistaken. He wouldn't hear of it, naturally; he thought it was the chance of his life, and an inexhaustible well for future reminiscences and conversations. I begged him to fetch an officer to whom I could explain matters. The General, enjoying himself immensely, sat in the car and listened. First a French lieutenant was fetched, then a captain, who told us very politely that their strict orders were to prevent anyone passing without a special safe conduct, but that the C.O. might authorize us to continue our journey. I sent for the C.O., who was at mess, and told him the names of my companions. He made his apologies very charm-

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ingly and with French grace, asking only for some sort of reasonable excuse to justify our visit to Ypres.

General Allenby, with unblushing effrontery, said that Madame de La Grange had property in Ypres, and that he had promised to take her to see if it had been destroyed. I was rather scared for a moment by this cheerful fib, but dared not say anything! The C.O., who had a son at Ypres, asked us to take a letter to him, and to give it to the first man of his regiment that we met.

The paved road was in a bad state, and we entered Ypres by the station side. The station is a ruin, the heavy building having collapsed on itself, as it were, iron girders and posts sticking up here and there among the wreckage. Of the houses round about, some are razed to the ground, of others there remain only outside walls. Of one, a shell had taken away only the front, leaving the rest intact. One saw the whole interior, like those models at exhibitions with only the façade lacking. Inside, this house looked just as it must have done when struck. On the first floor the table was laid, around were the chairs, even one high baby-chair. Plates and tumblers were still on the table. One could easily imagine a happy family party seated round the table at the moment when the shock of the explosion came to break up the meal. The wall had simply fallen in a heap into the street. Hanging on a nail was a birdcage, and the bird was singing, unconscious, as are human beings, of future danger. On the three remaining walls were pictures and photographs. There was one of an old woman in a cap, who lived, no doubt, in the good old days of peace in her town of Ypres, spending her life between her church and her home, little dreaming that many of those German visitors who passed through the lovely Cloth Hall, Cathedral, and charming little museum had only come to spy!

Little did the old lady guess that perhaps the Herr Professor with gold spectacles, who got out of the train opposite her house, was the very man who had invented that most infernal of horrors—poison gas—which was to kill her grandchildren! How little did our Belgian allies suspect the treachery of the enemy, who was all the

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time studying them so carefully! How greatly was German thoroughness in organization and strength admired in Belgium! Ah! to what ends are these qualities being used now? But I believe there is justice in heaven.

We wandered through the ruined streets of Ypres. Some soldiers came out of the cellars on fatigue duty, and I handed the C.O.'s letter to a sergeant.

It had stopped snowing and was light enough for me to take a snapshot of an aeroplane, with a little trail of white smoke against the blue sky as the shrapnel burst.

The Town Hall is badly damaged, and the Cathedral as well. The roof of the latter has fallen in, and those lovely walls, so dear to Flemish hearts, are now at the mercy of wind and weather, which are continuing the ravages of fire and shells. Alone, the statue of a local celebrity is standing between the church and the market. This personage, in a frock coat—hideous ceremonial garment of the age—respected by his fellow-citizens in life, seems to be respected by German shells now. It annoyed me, I must say, when I saw so much beauty in ruins. I can understand Providence sparing Joan of Arc, but Monsieur X. at Ypres—that's too much! On my return here I thought of assembling the Staff and asking to be officially informed when the benefactor of Ypres bites the dust.

Our melancholy explorations ended, we returned to La Motte au Bois, stopping to speak to the C.O. of the morning's adventure. He was charmed to hear of the delivery of his letter and to know that his son was still alive. He then asked, quite anxiously, about the state of my property. I had forgotten I was the possessor of any in Ypres, but General Allenby gave me a hasty dig with his elbow. Thereupon I replied that mercifully it had escaped so far! This was literally true, as the said property existed only in General Allenby's imagination. I received the C.O.'s warm congratulations. After seeing the state of Ypres I don't wonder he thought that I had been born under a lucky star!

As we re-entered the château, I was amazed to see a lady I did not know in the hall. She was, she said, Baroness Eschasseriaux, wife of the Territorial, the

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gentleman who, when not engaged in charming us with sweet music, spends a moist and grubby existence in filling up the "pot-holes" made in the roads by our English friends. As orders are stricter on the subject of wives than any other ladies, I put her in a private room to wait till concert-time—that is, after sunset—then, going about my usual occupations, I forgot her completely.

Baron Eschasseriaux was playing Chopin passionately when his wife, unable to bear it any longer, appeared on the staircase. The husband, happening to look up, suddenly saw her, rose, staggered—and asked her if he were dreaming. Then followed a touching little domestic idyll which lasted till the French authorities, having got wind of it, demanded immediate departure!

I have several of these guilty deeds on my conscience, having smuggled in, amongst others, my niece, Countess Boula de Mareuil, who came to see her husband, my cousin, and Countess Albert de Mun, to visit her son, and others.

In Ypres they told us that a few days ago the hospital was deliberately bombarded. The gun's range was carefully rectified until it was correct for the hospital. The scene there was terrible, thirty wounded men being wounded once more, and fifteen killed in their helplessness.

Wednesday: 17*th.*

The British Admiralty announce that the *Dresden* has been sunk, after five minutes' fighting, near the Island of Juan Fernandez, 700 kilometres west of Valparaiso.

The British saved the crew—80 officers and 292 men. The sensation the loss of the *Dresden* has caused in Germany seems to have been great.

I hope the Germans appreciate the chivalry of our allies, who did not abandon any of the crew—an act of chivalry not always shown by the German Navy!

Thursday: 18*th.*

The raid of a British cruiser in the Dardanelles is a subject of great pride to my guests. It is "Sport."

The cruiser *Amethyst* performed this exploit.

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Saturday: 20th.

Calais was again visited last night by Zeppelins—a visit she could have dispensed with.

For twenty minutes there was a furious bombardment of the town.

The bombs killed seven railway employés.

The Germans wanted revenge for the loss of the *Dresden.*

General Pau, at the head of a French Mission, has just arrived in Russia and begun his inspection.

News from Athens states that on Thursday, at eight in the morning, ships of the Allied Fleet entered the Straits. The town of Dardanelle is in flames and foreigners fleeing to Constantinople.

More unfortunates who are learning of the horrors of war.

Certain French journalists are visiting just now the lines occupied by the British Army. They state that, since the arrival of Marshal French, things are going well.

The crowd of men in uniform swarming in the streets no longer attracts attention. There are English soldiers in their tight uniform, officers of the Indian Army Corps in turbans, and, above all, those unforgettable British officers—tall, thin fellows with sinewy legs in tight fawn-coloured leggings, with their supple, rhythmic walk, punctuated by the slight movement of a cane.

"Ah!" observed one morning the comfortable, corpulent landlord of a little drinking-house, "how smart they are, but how astonishingly thin! I have not yet seen a fat one."

I could, nevertheless, have shown the stout landlord a plump British officer.

There is about one in a thousand—but they *do* exist!

Monday: 22nd.

I have a letter from Amaury, who, as a matter of form and according to old French tradition, asks my permission to marry Emily Sloane. I have no intention of refusing, but I should like to know what would happen if I said "No." I fancy they would do without my

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permission, and that he would be inclined to send me to the euphemistically named mental hospital at Bailleul—where the British officers often go, but only to make use of the well-organized baths and douches which are installed there!

Amaury, in another letter, says he has had two very unpleasant days. The Germans played him the trick of blowing up part of his trenches, and he had to spend half the night in the breach. Elsewhere the Germans were not doing well. They had miscalculated, and were not able to profit by their advantage. His men, he says, showed their usual courage and coolness before this trial.

He is sending me a case of champagne as a present for my guests, in recognition of the facilities given me in order to go to Rheims to see him at Christmas.

Tuesday: 23*rd.*

Two days ago I got a letter from Sir Maurice de Bunsen begging me to try and send him some information about the death of Prince Max of Hesse. He adds that the Grand Duchess von Baden, Princess of Prussia, the young Prince's grandmother, has been extremely good to English and French prisoners, and that she is ill with grief because she can get no news of the boy's death or burial-place.

Directly General Allenby, who was away on a tour of inspection, returned—*i.e.*, yesterday morning—I hastened to show him the letter, explaining that I knew Sir Maurice, who had been here in 1914, when he was studying the matter of ambulance stations. It turned out that he is a friend of General Allenby's also, so orders were given that his car was to be ready next day directly after lunch. He decided to take Colonel Birch and an aide-de-camp, and asked me to go, as I knew the country and the people so well that I could be of material use to them. My young niece, Countess Boula de Mareuil is here, and was very politely invited as well.

Our first stage was to the Mt. des Cats, where Prince Max had been killed. The British cavalry, coming up

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from the Aisne, had arrived in our district, as I have noted elsewhere, on the 12th October last year. General Gough's brigade had gone north towards Ypres, while another brigade attacked by the Bailleul road. It was General Gough's brigade which took the Mt. des Cats, and Prince Max, mortally wounded, was brought to the Trappist Monastery that dominates the southern side of the hill crest.

To our astonishment, when we reached the great doors of the monastery we found everything open. I went straight in, followed by my niece and the officers, and then we perceived the Reverend Father Superior. He raised his arms to heaven in protest, exclaiming in a strangled voice:

"*Ladies!* In the *cloister!* Such a thing has never been seen! It is *dreadful!*"

He then rushed us all into a little outside parlour, and, pulling himself together, explained that the doors were all open because they were expecting the arrival of an English ambulance. He had agreed to the establishment of a hospital there on condition that there should be only male nurses.

After having been duly humbled by the denunciations of the good Father, I assured him that I thought war changed everything—even to giving a certain elasticity to Trappist "Rule"! Having thus excused our temerity, I proceeded to the business which took us there, and translated to General Allenby all that the Father said.

Prince Max fell mortally wounded, hit by a shot from a machine-gun, on the north side of the Mt. des Cats. The battle was at its height and the monks were praying in the chapel. During a temporary lull, the Father Superior and a young priest went out to succour the wounded. German soldiers made the Fathers understand that their Prince was dying. The monks carried him into the monastery, where he lived a few hours, dying at last in the arms of the Father Superior. The Prince had already been robbed of everything of value—by his own men, they supposed—but, round his neck, they found a little bag containing the por-

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trait—a newspaper cutting—of a very pretty woman with a child in her arms (I do not know how far a Trappist is a judge of female beauty, but he said "very pretty"). "The child was very like the young Prince," he added.

During his last moments the monk had questioned the Prince. "Was he married?" After a short hesitation the Prince answered, "No." The Father Superior thought the question troubled him The young priest, however, had no doubt that the portrait was one of the young Prince and his mother. We should like to have had this relic, but in the excitement of evacuation the following night, when a German offensive was expected, the little bag and its contents were lost.

Around Prince Max lay other wounded, among them an English officer, who insisted on giving up his bed to the Prince and lying in the straw, though mortally wounded himself.

The Father Superior often thought, he said, of a certain simple German soldier dying on the ground, and the coming and going of a German officer, who knelt often at his bedside until the near approach of the British. He, the officer, had a terror of falling into their hands, and commended the dying soldier many times to the care of the monks before he left. This man also died before the Fathers left the monastery at dawn on the 18th, when not a living soul remained in the great building, but only the dead.

The Fathers had their Mass at three and four o'clock in the morning, and then descended to a farm they had at the foot of the hill, near Caestre. From that moment the Father Superior lost all trace of Prince Max's body, though he was assured it was taken later to Caestre. He strongly advised us to continue our inquiries there.

So to Caestre we went—a little town at the foot of the Mt. des Cats, on the road to Cassel. There we saw the Mayor, who said the body had been buried in the local cemetery after lying two days at the hospital, the Protestant prayers for the dead having been said by a clergyman who was passing with English troops. The body was exhumed later at night and taken elsewhere,

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but the exact spot he declined to indicate. So we were left as much in the dark as ever.

General Allenby decided to see the clergyman, and this very morning the Reverend Guinness, of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, walked into my library here. He is a charming man, and gave us all the information in his power. He had entered the Trappist Monastery directly after the battle, when it had been taken from the Germans by the British. In it he found the bodies of various officers and soldiers—Allied and enemy. Among them was that of Prince Max. He confirmed exactly the stories we had already heard, and had received a receipt from the Mayor of Caestre acknowledging his reception and burial of the Prince's body. This paper he showed us, and Mr. Guinness decided to leave it with me, saying it would be in safer hands, as he might be killed at any moment. I placed the paper in an envelope and put it in my safe.

Now I have sent all these details to Sir Maurice de Bunsen. We can get no farther at present.[1]

Wednesday: 24th.

Although the Cavalry Corps is being reformed little by little, and has often to second the infantry in the trenches, the Staff work has been less heavy of late, so that the young officers managed to give two theatrical performances—yesterday and the day before—in the theatre improvised in the orangery. A scenic artist from a London theatre did some very pretty scenes for last Christmas, and they now appear on every festive occasion! Major Thornhill performs prodigies of imagination to fill the programme.

In one scene—I lent them a dress, hat, and parasol—I was represented by one of the young officers receiving

[1] In 1928 there was published a book, "L'Agonie de Bailleul," by Lucien Detrez, in which appears an account of the disappearance of the body of Prince Max. It varies slightly from what we heard at the time, and I do not know if the mystery has ever been cleared up.

Mr. Guinness was killed very soon after his visit to La Motte au Bois.

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the moans and complaints of all the farmers' wives in the place concerning the damage committed by the Cavalry Corps. It required Herculean efforts, it seems, to get the skirt fastened, as the young officer's waist measurement and mine differed considerably, which I easily perceived when I got the skirt back very much split at the waist!

At these fêtes I have the greatest and most heartfelt satisfaction in seeing that when the musicians play the "Marseillaise" the officers look at me pointedly, showing that, for them, at these moments, I represent France. I experience, indeed, deep emotion to find myself in the place of honour among those great chiefs who come amongst us for a little necessary relaxation after the many hours of hard fighting they have experienced. Nearly every one of the British Army divisions possesses its band of Follies—often professional London actors, who give performances right up to the trenches. They have amusing variety shows, dances, and songs, and are usually dressed as pierrots.

Thursday: 25th.

I have been asked to put up an Admiral and two Generals who have come to visit the Cavalry Corps Staff, and to give them hospitality.

Opening my window in the morning, I saw worthy Théophile in his blue apron, accompanied by Mino and the Admiral, the last gorgeous with gold braid as if on board ship at a great review.

He had, in fact, been reviewing the kitchen-garden.

Our concerts have been such a success that they have been resumed during the last five days.

Amaury is worrying as to the prudence of my guests. They do not, indeed, take many precautions: the British seem to rely a good deal on their lucky stars—and the place is lighted up like a casino every night!

But it seems to be a proved fact that bombs from an aeroplane rarely fall exactly on the point of objective.

All the worse for the near neighbours who get the visiting card instead!

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Saturday: 27th.

Yesterday we received the sensational news that the submarine U29 had been sunk with her crew. It was this same submarine which sank the three British cruisers, the *Aboukir*, the *Hogue*, and the *Cressy*. Well —it deserved its fate!

Sunday: 28th.

All the American papers publish an account of an interview given by Marshal French to a well-known journalist, Mr. Palmer.

Speaking of the results of the war, the Generalissimo said: "There can be no doubt as to the issue of the conflict. I have never been so confident of victory as I am today!"

Comforting words for those at the front as well as the rear.

Monday: 29th.

A Taube flew over Hazebrouck and let fall a bomb which did not explode. Unfortunately two children touched it, caused it to explode, and were most horribly blown to bits. The wretched parents are painful to see, but they are to blame themselves for lack of care towards the poor children.

Not only parents, but school-teachers and priests, are constantly describing the danger, but with little result. Directly they get outside, the little scatter-brains forget everything!

It is asserted that the Germans are dropping poisoned sweets for the children to eat, but I think I should have to eat one to believe that.

APRIL, 1915

Friday: 2nd.

Amaury has sent me a map of his trenches in Champagne, which greatly interests the General Staff, to whom I have shown the paper. They keep coming to me for explanations; it is, of course, too technical for

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me, and I have afforded the officers great delight by translating "Fourneau de Mine" (Mine Chamber) as "cooking stove."

Yesterday I received an "April fish," a pike, made of a silver sort of stuff filled with sweets, from Boissier. I can't discover who is the author of this amiable joke as the whole staff smiles an enigmatic smile when I ask!

Saturday: 8*rd.*

Last night Hazebrouck received at least a dozen bombs. People are getting used to it, and pay them very little attention now.

Béthune also has been "rained on." There are craters in the forest and the fields, and many houses destroyed in both towns.

Fortunately there is much greater material damage than loss of life.

Thursday: 8*th.*

Boy Capel, having been away, lent me his horse, and I had an exquisite ride through the forest, followed by his orderly.

I have gone up several notches in the estimation of my guests. I am sufficiently sporting to ride, so I am a lady! I wish, by the way, my guests could come into daily contact with officers of the French army. Unified tactics between our armies seem necessary. If the two armies could be under one command!

We ought to benefit mutually by our respective qualities, and the British Army could only profit by the experience that the French have gained during forty years of compulsory service.

The *Temps* is publishing very pessimistic articles taken from the Berlin press. The *Deutsche Tageszeitung* even goes so far as to say: "We are anxious because we are isolated. Twilight is falling upon our country; for us black night is beginning!"

Sunday: 11*th.*

A German prisoner says that the noise of the French 75's already half kills its victims!

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I think of my poor Amaury's ears. He has a battery roaring about 100 metres from his post; he will return to me quite deaf.

The weather is lovely. One would feel quite happy and grateful to Providence if the sun did not shine as impartially on the German trenches as on ours!

Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, has just sent to the Archbishop of Paris a letter, in which he expresses the admiration inspired by the fidelity of France to her century-long rôle of guardian of Right and protectress of Civilization.

Wednesday: 14*th.*

More vandalism! Incendiary bombs have been dropped on Nancy by an airship which flew over the town.

The population remained calm.

The Staff gave me a surprise by sending a car for Félix, who is near the trenches of Vermelles.

The old "poilu" lunched with us and had an immense success. He tried to speak English, and everyone did their best to understand him, and returned the compliment by speaking French. Things were a little confused, but I acted as interpreter when it became necessary.

Thursday: 15*th.*

I have had a letter from Louis[1] (Sebourg), dated 22nd March.

He says:

"I have a succession of people, too, but less agreeable than yours.

"We are always hoping for a visit from you; it is not fair that you should always be the other side of the barricade; try to cross it! If you come, don't bring much baggage. Our means are small. No letters from Amaury. They are stopped from coming to our address."

A great event, the arrival of the case of champagne

[1] Baron Louis de La Grange, my brother-in-law.

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from Amaury this morning. It is an expression of gratitude from a grateful son, happy to have seen his mother, thanks to the British Army.

Friday: 16*th.*

Yesterday a German Zeppelin flew over the coasts of Britain.

Sixteen bombs were dropped in different parts of the country. Not a single victim! It is really miraculous. Rather an expensive demonstration!

When one thinks of the cost of a Zeppelin flight or even of a bomb, it seems a poor investment for the Boche, but they say he is likely to continue in his evil ways.

Amaury writes and says he is resting in a little house on the side of a hill, near the place where he spent the winter, and where he had the joy of seeing me. There is a park of 120 acres, and for the first time for a long while he is far from cannon, which is an exquisite relief. He says it seems so strange to be near a village inhabited by civilians, to hear the church bells, and to be able to walk about without being fired on. He will understand, he adds, how the souls will feel on the Day of Judgment on rising from the dead.

Emily Sloane arrives on the 27th or 28th by the *Rochambeau.*

Monday: 19*th.*

Amaury writes to me that he is getting so accustomed to the monotony of a rabbit-life existence in an underground hole that he will hardly be able to realize the joy of a change.

His brigade has had the honour of being mentioned in a communiqué, which says:

"We have successfully exploded four mine chambers at 'Cholera Farm,' to the north of Berri-au-Bac, while the enemy were working there and we followed up the explosion by a rain of machine-gun fire. A German listening post was blown up and disappeared."

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This name of "Cholera Farm"[1] makes me fear they are in an unhealthy district, as the poilus have a little way of christening sectors by special names which express their amenities or disagreeable characteristics. The Tommies do the same, and one finds the most varied names on the British front.

Wednesday: 21*st.*

A letter from Amaury dated the 20th asking me to join him in Paris on the 24th. He has got leave and is going to Bordeaux to fetch Miss Sloane.

Thursday: 22*nd.*

Another letter from Amaury, saying his Chief is absent, and he has orders to stay and replace him. His leave is postponed until the 2nd May, and therefore the pleasure of receiving Miss Sloane falls on me alone.

Amaury is now installed in a house which has no panes to the windows. But he says that in spite of this ventilation the smell left by his predecessors is horrible.

Saturday: 24*th.*

In an official note from London is announced the defeat of the Turks in Mesopotamia. Their retreat has become a rout.

Their leader, Suleïman Asken, is reported to have committed suicide.

The newspapers reckon Turkish losses from the 12th to the 16th at 6,000 men.

Poor Turks! They are not a bad sort. One may pity them for not having thrown in their lot with us. It would have been better for them as well as for us.

Sunday: 25*th.*

Today General Howell of Allenby's Staff came specially over to see me. He took me aside and told

[1] Cholera Farm, the name given by officers to a very unhealthy spot, where dead bodies were left lying for months between the lines. Neither Allies nor enemies could reach them to give them burial.

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me that the line had yielded at Ypres because the enemy had had resort to asphyxiating gas—a new and diabolical invention. He said that things were very serious indeed, but that they hoped to be able to stem the German advance; only in any case the Staff wished to warn me that I must be prepared for any eventuality. How kind of them to trouble about me even in the middle of the battle!

During the first fortnight of this month there have been heavy attacks on Wulverghem, and Ypres was bombarded by shells of heavy calibre. About the 14th the British Army replied by a big push on Hill 60, and on the 17th they carried this point brilliantly, thanks to a formidable mine explosion. General Allenby went to England a few days ago, and General Byng replaces him.

Tuesday: 27th.

War has a new horror. The Germans have used asphyxiating gas as a cover for a tremendous onslaught. The British, French, Belgians, and Canadians were all overwhelmed by the fumes, and the Germans have crossed the Yser Canal. This is, indeed, a terrible thing; what will happen next? They say that, first of all, a white cloud rose up about a metre into the air from the German trenches, and under this a greenish cloud crept along the ground, advancing against our helpless men.

We hear that the Canadians really saved the situation on the 25th by replacing our Colonial soldiers who had been decimated by the gas and the brutality of the attack, which had thus left the left flank of the Canadians exposed. It seems it was a British trumpeter, billeted in Ypres, who gave the alarm by galloping through the town giving the call to arms. All the men employed at the rear of an army, the shoemakers, tailors, cooks, and troops resting, rushed up to the front and threw themselves into the breach where the Germans were forcing a way between the British and Belgian fronts. This magnificent feat of arms has once more saved Ypres.

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General Sir H. Plumer bore the brunt of this terrible attack. A Chief like this inspires confidence in every one of us.

Wednesday: 28*th.*

The Anglo-French Expeditionary Corps, which left Egypt under the command of Sir Ian Hamilton, has begun to co-operate with the Allied Fleets attacking the Dardanelles.

The disembarkment of the Army at several points of the peninsula of Gallipoli took place with entire success. The opinion of Colonel Repington is that the task of the Allied troops will not be easy—rather the contrary—but that, if it is successful in getting them established in the peninsula, it will be easy to get reinforcement and the cannon will contribute to the success of the attack.

Thursday: 29*th.*

A communiqué from the French Admiralty in the *Temps* says that the *Léon Gambetta,* one of our armoured cruisers, was torpedoed during the night of the 26th-27th in the Adriatic.

There were on board 22 officers and a crew of 714 men.

This is a cruel loss! All the officers died at their posts, but 186 of the men were rescued.

The sympathy shown by our British Allies is consoling. They are very sensitive to anything touching the Navy and will make up for our loss by increased activity in their own.

Friday: 30*th.*

On the 25th another furious but vain attack was made on the British front, and the Germans have revenged themselves by using 420 shells on Ypres. The few thousands of inhabitants still living in their cellars were evacuated towards Poperinghe.

After the alarm of last week the Staff has gone back to its usual habits, and General Howell has been able to reassure me.

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I am going to Paris to meet Miss Sloane. She will surely be very disappointed to find me there instead of my son, but war brings more important disappointments than the fact of finding a future mother-in-law instead of a future husband on one's arrival.

MAY, 1915

Sunday: 2nd.

Amaury having obtained his leave, my presence is rather superfluous in Paris, and I suppose more useful at La Motte au Bois, so I am going back to my half-safe dugout.

Wednesday: 5th.

I took a photograph of a jolly crowd of Tommies and officers returning from a football match on our field. I am not a great expert at football, but, judging from the noise on the occasion of these weekly football matches, it must be a very fierce game.

Sunday: 9th.

I have just heard that the gigantic English liner, the *Lusitania*, carrying 1,900 passengers, while on its way from New York to Liverpool, was hit by two torpedoes as it was approaching the Irish coast. No previous warning had been given, and, although the weather was fine and the sea calm, the boat inclined at such an angle that rescue work was made difficult. The liner sank like a stone within ten minutes of the explosion. 150 of the 188 American passengers carried lost their lives, including Mr. Vanderbilt. Among the victims were over 40 children. One was found floating on the surface, wrapped in the arms of its dead mother. We share the grief and mourning of the United States, and we hope that this catastrophe will cause this great country to join us in fighting those who, in public opinion, have thus committed not only a crime but a big political and international mistake.

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Monday: 10*th.*

There was another bombardment in the region of Ypres on the 8th, this time by *gas bombs.* But the British troops had gas masks, and there was hand to hand fighting with bayonets.

This month has so far been very fine, even hot, and the canal serves as a swimming bath for the Cavalry Corps. Sometimes results were rather amusing.

Last week the old Reverend Mother of our Nuns came to find me, evidently in a state of some excitement. She said that the men of the Cavalry Corps were bathing in the canal in their birthday suits and no other, and that the young girls, going to church or convent, had no other road than the towing-path, thus obtaining sights of a most unorthodox nature. Would I intervene at once? So I spoke to General Allenby. He seemed much amused, and next morning come to find me, begging me to fix the limits of the bathing pool myself. At the door we found two Tommies, each with a long wooden pole over his shoulder, to which was attached a board bearing the word "Bath."

The General and I walked along the canal until some three-quarters of a mile from the château, which is exactly opposite the village, I pointed out a place where the water seemed as clear as it can be in a canal which serves both as spring and sewage dump! At the point indicated, the canal is between cultivated fields and forest. No one is *obliged* to go there, and in a moment the posts were planted at a comfortable distance apart for strong swimmers. This virtuous work of modesty thus accomplished, the General and I returned with consciences at rest.

The next day I was writing letters in the library when the door opened and General Allenby, with the expression on his face that I now know precedes sarcasm, walked in.

"My dear lady," he said, "you know those signposts we put in yesterday? Well, I wanted to see if things were all right, so I went there this morning. All your girls were there watching the bathing!"

I had, of course, to defend the girls, and replied quite

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fiercely that they certainly could not be *my* girls from the convent, but some "black sheep" who had strayed in somehow.

But, to tell the truth, I thought it would be more discreet not to go and see!

Another day General Allenby and I were strolling along the canal banks leading to the "Grand Dam"—a lock in the forest, where the water is very clear—when we noticed a movement under the liquid surface like the rippling produced by seals under water. General Allenby suggested I should walk on, and presently he rejoined me a good deal amused. He had made a pretty good guess, it seemed, the "seal" being stout General O'Keeffe, chief of the Surgeons, the most delightful of Irishmen. He had gone for a swim in the simplest attire, and, seeing me coming, had dived to hide from me. It was time I went away. He would certainly have let himself drown before reappearing on the surface!

Wednesday: 12*th.*

On the 8th General Allenby received orders to take over the command of the 5th Corps, whose Headquarters are at Abeele. I had this charming letter from him:

HEADQUARTERS,
CAVALRY CORPS.
8*th May*, 1915.

MY DEAR BARONESS,

I have relinquished command of the Cavalry Corps and taken up another command, and in leaving La Motte au Bois I must express my thanks to you for the kindness you have shown and the help you have always given, not only to myself and my Staff, but to the troops under my command, and to the Army in general.

When in October, 1914, the Cavalry Corps, under my command, advancing from the south, reached La Motte au Bois, and in co-operation with the Cavalry Corps of General Conneau, drove the German cavalry from the Forest of Nieppe, the information and assistance offered by you were of great value.

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Since then you have unceasingly devoted your time and energy to furthering our interests as well as those of the French Armies, and your efforts have deservedly earned our deep gratitude and thanks.

I am, yours sincerely,

EDMUND ALLENBY,
Lieutenant-General,
Army Cavalry Corps.

Tuesday: 18*th.*

General Byng is here instead of Allenby. The new chief only knew me by name, so that we were on purely ceremonial terms. In General Allenby's time the doors between the two quite separate parts of the house, the Staff quarters and my own rooms, were rarely locked, and people passed freely from one to another, as was convenient or agreeable.

This time I found the communicating door locked and an elaborate notice on my side: "No admittance except on Duty." I confess I was a little offended, so while the Staff was at Mess I put on their side: "No admittance except for Rest!"

Poor General Byng understood at once, and, being extremely good-hearted, he came to meet me in the park and assured me he wasn't responsible for the placard. I think I know the offending officer who chose to act as billsticker. But, of course, I pretend I don't!

Thursday: 20*th.*

Amaury goes back to the front, his leave being ended. He has got Emily to agree to go back to La Motte au Bois with me. She seems inclined for a little stay there.

I hear through the Staff that charming Lieutenant John Bigge, whom I liked so much when he came here to arrange the billeting for General Byng in November of last year, has been killed at Festubert. He was in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. This news makes me very sad. He was amongst those in the British Army who do honour to the aristocracy, so highly tried, since the beginning of the war. I was very much struck by his look of distinction, and I think with sorrow of his

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father who came here with the King last December, and who thanked me so warmly for the little I had been able to do for his son.

Friday: 21*st.*

I have to go to Paris for business, and shall return to Château La Motte on the 24th with Emily Sloane. I am anxious to see if she will like the old home. Thanks to the British Army, she will not find the place lonesome! Perhaps she would like it better without such a great number of tenants, but her fine education will hide all sentiments of disappointment in finding a house rather noisy and not very tidy!

Tuesday: 25*th.*

Emily Sloane is here at La Motte au Bois, and we have both settled down here in the old home!

Once I should have regarded anyone as a lunatic had he or she told me that my future daughter-in-law would be received in her future home by the British Army!

My guests do not apparently know of the matrimonial projects, but I shall give a word to the wise—a gentle hint to some friend worthy of confidence and of sharing our hopes and joys.

We are all feeling happy today because Italy has at last declared war on Germany. The poet D'Annunzio has roused public opinion and enthusiasm throughout the land by means of his fiery speeches.

Wednesday: 26*th.*.

A letter from Amaury, and also a photograph of himself taken in a trench 100 metres from those of the Germans. He is using for bombarding the enemy two trench mortars constructed under the good King Louis-Philippe, loaded with *bombes à cheddite.* The missile is bigger than the gun! But he can get such an exact aim that the artillery men are quite pale with jealousy. He says that this game is his distraction, and it is a useful distraction, since the best work one can do is to kill as many Germans as possible.

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Thursday: 27th.

Amaury is off for an unknown destination. . . . He tells me his dream is to live again the active hours of August and September. Anything will be better, he says, than the stupefying life in the trenches, or even resting a few kilometres behind the lines.

People like us, of lively imagination, do not stand such an uninteresting life easily.

I understand his impatience at having to remain inactive. He is very much like my side of the family, which is remarkable for its independence of character and for the need of freedom of action.

It really is more to his credit than it might be to some men, that he has known how to submit and obey without understanding.

Saturday: 29th.

Amaury writes that he is in a Louis XIV. château, surrounded by magnificent trees, and, by our harmless little code for deceiving the Censorship, I guess that it is situated near Doullens.

He thinks that his brigade is likely to see fighting very soon.

"The hour of glory approaches," he writes gaily.

His Commander-in-Chief is General Castelnau, who is, I know, an admirable Chief.

Amaury thinks that the coalition against Germany can hardly become more redoubtable, but that the economic coalition, in his opinion, is much more so, and will be prolonged after the war and conclusion of peace.

The Germans are going "all in," and perhaps have not lost their hope of conquest.

They are deceived by the example of Frederick the Great, and their proud confidence is only equalled by their admirable tenacity. They are powerful adversaries—one must recognize it, but so much the greater the glory for France, when they are beaten!

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JUNE, 1915

Thursday: 3rd.

Amaury writes:

"Pascal says: 'One must use Philosophy in dealing with one's passions.' I am trying to be philosophical about my freedom—which is better still!

"In this state of relative repose, when there is really nothing to do, one wastes one's time—and gets into a deplorable state of mind."

Emily Sloane is going. She will leave a great gap in the household.

Amaury pities me because I am losing my little companion. Indeed, I shall look forward to her return.

Already everyone likes her in the countryside. She is going through her apprenticeship as châtelaine, and shows every sign of being able to replace me very well.

Amaury tells me of a curious thing that happened at Carancey.

The French attack simply went through the German lines like butter, and an extraordinary number of prisoners was taken.

He is delighted that the bands are playing again in the regiments.

They give concerts in the village "places" as in time of peace, and it helps the morale of troops and civilians alike.

The harvests are magnificent, and the land cultivated right up to the trenches.

Sunday: 6th.

The French peasant is the admiration of all the Allies; they admire the women and children, who, in the absence of husband and father, care for stock and work the fields, never failing in their efforts and never weakening under any fatigue.

For the question of damages, inevitable in war-time, with the occupation of troops a few miles behind the firing-line, all the Allies have made an arrangement

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and elected a Commission for each country, whose duty it is to study the claims of and pay indemnities to the civilians, and they ask the help of the French authorities in order to settle these matters. In my district I am often asked to give my opinion, and this gives me the pleasure of going to Hardelot-on-Sea, where General Morrison, Chief of the Claims Commission, has his office. I meet there some of my charming British friends, who, when they write to me, call themselves "Your devoted thieves"! Yesterday a farmer's wife from Morbecque came to complain, saying that her cow, in eating grass, had swallowed a piece of barbed wire belonging to the British Army. The barbed wire penetrated the heart and the cow died. In great haste I went to explain the case, finding that the farmer's wife had asked too much for her cow, and, on the other hand, the Claims Commission had offered too little for the damage. I found General Morrison lunching in the restaurant, and he very kindly asked me to have lunch with him. After having explained the case of the cow, I began to cough terribly, having a bad cold. Smiling, the General said: "My dear lady, I think you swallowed the barbed wire instead of the cow!" "Well," said I, "if I had swallowed the barbed wire you would have to pay less for me than for the cow, on account of the skin and the meat that can be sold in the case of the cow and not in my case!"

Thursday: 10*th.*

I don't know exactly in which sector Amaury is. I believe, however, he is at Artois, where the battle is in full swing. If only he could come further north I should have a chance of seeing him when resting behind the trenches.

Monday: 14*th.*

A very sad letter from Amaury, who tells me he did everything—almost the impossible—risking his life to bring back the body of our poor cousin Antoine d'Andlau, who fell facing the foe in the barbed wire entanglements during an attack.

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Amaury's division covered itself with glory near Hebuterne.

A German prisoner, a captain, said he had never seen soldiers attacking with such an entire contempt of danger. It is good to hear a judgment like this—even from an enemy. It must show to Germany that if their soldiers are wonderful fighters, marvellously and severely disciplined, the French poilu with his "go" and enthusiasm is a redoubtable enemy.

Wednesday: 16*th.*

My guests are rejoicing at a big victory that was won yesterday at Festubert. It frees a region that was very difficult to hold.

Saturday: 19*th.*

Amaury has given me to understand by means of our own little private code that he has returned to his Champagne sector, which seems to be quieter than the sector he has just left. If one could only give him a little surprise and find him near his dugout, and at the same time I would bring Emily Sloane with me.

Sunday: 20*th.*

Yesterday I had a young Madame Goubault here to visit her husband. She told me that her parents owned a house near Rheims, where they represent the firm of Chandon, and that could they ever be of any use to me, they would be very glad. Their house, Château de Tauxières, is only about seven miles from Amaury's camp, so here was the chance to take Emily to see him.

Sunday: 27*th.*

Amaury has had another change of commanders, Colonel Fontsagrive having been replaced by another Colonel, who is suffering from toothache and vents his bad temper on his officers.

It is a pity, as Amaury has always got on so well with his chiefs!

This disagreeable business is making him think

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seriously of the air service, where he would be his own master, acting as he judges best to attain his ends.

This reminds me of the story of a British officer who went into "Flying" because he was so tired of always having muddy boots! The poor fellow was so disillusioned, however, since he found he spent much more time on a muddy and sodden aviation ground than in the air!

Speaking of Emily Sloane, Amaury says that the waiting will be hard, but that their mutual feelings will only be the more lasting. He is already making plans for after the war, looking forward to happy days of rest and peace.

His desire is to take up some useful work and career, with the powerful support of a devoted affection and the wide intelligence that he has found in Miss Sloane. Happy promises of the future! I hope God may permit of their realization.

He writes in one letter:

"To be one's own master—to fly, if it pleases one, between two clouds, across, above, below, with the chance of meeting a Boche at any turning and to bring him down—if he does not do the same to you!"

He adds that he will have gained experience and wisdom after this war which will permit him to judge coolly of political struggles which will seem of small account after the great struggle that he will have passed through.

Wednesday: 30th.

I have expressed my terror to Amaury at the idea of his going into the Flying Corps, but he assures me that in his life the factor of "Danger" does not exist, for the simple reason that it is everywhere, as much or as little in aviation as everywhere else!

He has faith in his lucky star, which will help him as much as possible, and he must confide the rest to Providence.

The departure of Emily Sloane for America is fixed for the 4th August. She sails on the *Touraine*, and she

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will discuss future events with her father and persuade him to return as soon as possible to France for the marriage.

The Germans are increasing their activity at sea, and her ship risks being torpedoed.

Even this eventuality she seems to face with the greatest coolness.

Although I am feeling it very much, it seems so impressive somehow. I am trying to pull strings to get Amaury into the Flying Corps. He has now returned to Champagne quite near to the place where I saw him at Christmas, 1914.

I remembered the kind offer made to me by Madame Goubault, whom I had once reunited to her husband at La Motte au Bois.

I wrote to her, announcing my visit with a young "cousin"—that is, Miss Sloane—who exchanged her rôle of fiancée for that of cousin for the time being, in order to keep the rather open secret of the engagement.

JULY, 1915

Monday: 5th.

On the evening of the 3rd the plot was put into execution. Emily Sloane and I arrived at the Château de Tauxières. We were received with the best grace in the world, and next morning Amaury arrived mounted on his good mare "Face." For the next two days she spent her time galloping to and fro, rewarded by a good stable and a well-filled manger. In spite of the secret, the Goubault family were not long in discovering Miss Sloane's real relationship, one purely of the heart, and not even to be attributed to La Fayette. The happiest hours are always the shortest, and so these, too, passed like a dream, and we returned to Paris, where I did not want to leave Emily Sloane when she needed affection, while poor Amaury went back to his Brigade.

Tuesday: 18th.

Amaury writes of his joy at having seen Emily Sloane and myself! It seems to him now like a dream. He

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LIEUTENANT AMAURY DE LA GRANGE

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tells me that his Commander-in-Chief has been changed, to his regret, as he was in the entire confidence of General Leleu and Colonel Fontsagrive.

The new man is a Colonel, whose arrival in the brigade will delay the leave that Amaury should have in his turn.

This alone will make Amaury regard him with a jaundiced eye! He will have all he can do to be forgiven!

Thursday: 15*th.*

When leaving the 102nd Brigade, Colonel Fontsagrive mentioned Amaury in despatches, as follows:

"LIEUTENANT DE LA GRANGE

"A very intelligent officer, who has always shown much bravery and activity. He has attended specially to the organization of trench mortars, from which he has obtained very fine results, on points where our artillery could not reach."

Great news has come. Amaury has been sent as pupil-pilot to Chartres—so now the die is cast!

He is attracted by the sporting side.

Saturday: 17*th.*

They have taken General Gouraud back to Paris badly wounded at the Dardanelles. His condition caused great anxiety during the journey of five days.

The doctors were obliged to amputate his right arm on board ship, and he has both legs fractured besides. Before leaving he wrote with his left hand a word of farewell to his troops, touching and full of hope.

On the 6th July there was held an important Conference at Calais, the most important since the beginning of the war perhaps.

At it were present all members of the Governments of France and England.

There were Lord Crewe, Ambassador, Sir Edward Grey, Field-Marshal French, Lord Kitchener, and Mr.

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Asquith, these last two having come to visit the British Army and to see the King of the Belgians.

Tuesday: 20*th.*

Emily Sloane wanted to spend the last part of her stay in France at Chartres, and so asked me to chaperone her. Amaury is with Jules de St. Sauveur and the son of General de Maud'huy. They have a flat.

We are at the Hôtel du Grand Monarque, and the future mother-in-law chaperones the future daughter-in-law with the greatest benevolence, in the society of her own son.

Here is a situation that could only happen in war-time when everything is upside down.

Wednesday: 28*th.*

Since the 22nd, the British have advanced their lines on the Menin—Ypres route, near the Château d'Hooge, where they had prepared a mine explosion.

Always this Ypres salient so fiercely attacked!

Yesterday the news was good, but at the price of such sacrifice! When I look around me and see these strong, cheerful men, full of vigour, I think with horror of those trenches which tomorrow will be full of suffering and of the dead!

AUGUST, 1915

Sunday: 1*st.*

I have said good-bye to Emily, who is sailing with her faithful maid Jeanne. She will have some trouble in convincing her father that it is an ideal thing to marry a Frenchman whom he does not know, and who is daily exposed to every possible danger; at any time, in a too bold flight, he may come down in the enemy lines and remain a prisoner for an indefinite time.

I may add to this a certain distrust on the part of Mr. Sloane of the French matrimonial character—so I can easily see the welcome awaiting poor Emily at New York; how diplomatically she must need present her request!

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Tuesday: 3rd.

Once more having returned again to my old home, I feel sadder than ever, for I wonder what future God has reserved for my young betrothed couple, who have decided to marry in the midst of the torment and uncertitude of the moment.

This young girl, whom I love already so tenderly on account of her feelings towards Amaury, will twice cross the ocean before returning to us. The German submarines are incessantly threatening those brave ones who risk their lives on the sea. All Amaury's future happiness is now on that ocean bristling with these death-traps.

Around the old house the guns are roaring, but the British Army protects me and I have confidence in it.

Wednesday: 4th.

We have now been a year at war, a year of more efficacious effort than appears at present.

We must have confidence and persevere.

Sunday: 8th.

On the 4th of this month one of the most brilliant of the Staff officers, Major Hamilton-Grace, was killed in a motor accident on the road to Bergues. It was on this occasion that I had further proof of the warmth of heart and feeling of General Byng.

A car driven by Captain Capel skidded at a turning and was hurled against a peasant's cart. The shaft struck poor Hamilton-Grace full in the chest, and flung him out on the road. The accident was not fully realized for a moment, and when they ran back to help him, he was already dying. Captain Capel was nearly out of his mind with despair. Luckily my nephew, Odon de Lubersac, his friend, who has recently been appointed interpreter to the Cavalry Corps, prevented another misfortune!

The dead officer was beloved by all, and one of my most devoted guests, so I asked General Byng to allow me to have him temporarily put in our family vault till

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the body could be taken to England, and I shall never forget the terms in which the General thanked me.

A "chapelle ardente" was arranged in the hall, and flowers covered the coffin. A clergyman said a few touching words; all the Staff officers made the responses to the prayers, and then the cortège set out for the cemetery. The coffin was borne by the men in the office, and the heavy tread of spurred boots rang like a knell on the paved road, the villagers respectfully watching the funeral procession from their doors Our Curé had some scruples about the interment of a Protestant, but he decided finally that there should be no difference made in burial when all show equal heroism in life and death.

That same evening the Cavalry Corps left here. After nine months together we have become great friends, sharing the same hopes and anxieties, and my adieux were full of regrets.

That short interview in the night of 12th October last year had already attracted me to those who came back on the 11th November, so happy to find a "home" and settle down for a little while! I have followed all the fluctuations of battle, often with anguish in my heart, every day asking myself if we were to fall under the heel of the Prussian.

For a whole month I remained in ignorance of the fate of that fine Staff who had followed in the enemy's retreat, and then, forced back by sheer weight of numbers, but always resisting grimly, side by side with our splendid French troops, formed a veritable wall by Ypres and Ploegsteert Wood, going down as far as Armentières. All this was not far from us, but so firm did the Army seem that we had confidence.

Thursday: 12*th.*

Yesterday, the 11th, on a beautiful moonlight night, the Zeppelins flew over the English coast. Fires and victims were the result. But one at least paid dearly, for it was chased by the hydroplanes of Dunkirk as it was flying over Ostend, hoping to land, and was brought down.

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A cable announces the safe arrival of Emily Sloane, so our anxieties are at rest!

Saturday: 14*th.*

Amaury will have finished his trials as pilot on the 25th, when he hopes to get leave and come to La Motte au Bois before joining the squadron to which he will be gazetted. His training has been very quick; if he is only sure of himself!

He has inherited from his father the calm of the Fleming, and from my family the faculty for rapid decision—good qualities for the flying man!

On the 18th, I shall go to Chartres to see Amaury before he leaves the Flying School.

Emily is returning to France in September, accompanied by her father and sister. So she has been able to convince everyone concerned of the moral security to be found in a French marriage! Abroad, French husbands are regarded as inconstant and fickle, and there are a good many rather unkind legends told of them.

Amaury will restore their prestige as husbands just as the poilus in the trenches have rebutted the stories of their lack of discipline as soldiers.

Monday: 23*rd.*

I was getting ready to go out, with the window wide open, when a sort of yellow smoke began to creep into the room. I shut the window angrily, thinking: "These rascals of Englishmen, they burn bad coal that they bring from their country!"

But in the village I met someone who was suddenly taken sick, and who retired hurriedly into her house, not waiting to explain her malady. This evening the officers told me that a powerful cloud of asphyxiating gas has killed many soldiers at Languemark and Steenstraat, and that the poisonous sheet has followed the line of the canal right up to us.

Saturday: 28*th.*

I hear that Rudyard Kipling, the great English national writer, has visited the French front—a fine

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homage shown to our poilus. His journey began in Soissonnais and ended in Alsace.

At Rheims, before the Cathedral, the Apostle and Poet of the British Empire advanced quickly, it is said, to the foot of the statue of Joan of Arc, and, raising his hat an instant, he remained bareheaded before the heroic statue, so miraculously spared by the bombardments.

Monday: 30th.

I hardly had time to get the house cleaned, when General Pulteney, head of the 3rd Corps, arrived. As everyone had always spoken of him as "Puttey," I so addressed him when we first met, and there was never any frigidity. He is what we call a "bon vivant," with a lively and twinkling eye. His Staff is a very cheerful one, and I see extremely frivolous Parisian papers lying on the tables mixed up with ordnance maps and plans of attack.

This 3rd Corps, formed by Lord Kitchener, is composed of varied elements. One sees as many kilts as khaki trousers, and the Glengarry of little Colonel Rose is to be seen bustling about everywhere, in every part of the billet, superintending the general installation. From the moment of rising he has his revolver in his belt, as though he were camped in a wood, reconnoitring the enemy. He is never separated from a certain weird instrument, which, he says, indicates the presence of springs of water! When the little wand twitches and turns in his hand, that means water is near. And, as in Flanders water is often only a few inches beneath the surface, the wand waggles merrily.

I see very little of General Pulteney's cheerful presence, being much more favoured with the company of Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, a charming man, whom I liked at sight. Very tall, with grey hair and fine blue eyes, I should think he must be something of a "lady-killer"! As he is fond of inventions, I often see him in the park experimenting with trench tools and poison gas, which spoil my lawn. There is a very original artist in the Staff who has a talent for the mischievous

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THE BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE AND GENERAL SIR WILLIAM PULTENEY, 1915

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arrangement of cuttings from *La Vie Parisienne*. The most unexpected and surprising juxtapositions are to be found in these composite pictures. He has arranged a screen like a staircase; on each step are curious neighbours, as, for instance, Mr. Lloyd George with a modern Eve on his knee, or Lord Balfour carrying on his shoulder a Venus well known to the world of the grands boulevards! When I cross the office I lower my gaze primly, but I manage not to miss a single detail of the screen all the same!

One day, when General Allenby was passing La Motte au Bois, he half stopped to introduce another General, and then suddenly remembered that the ex-wife of this particular man had married one of the officers billeted here, and thought it better not to bring the two husbands face to face. So I was deprived of a visit from General Allenby, which was disappointing.

SEPTEMBER, 1915

Wednesday: 1*st.*

The Baron James de Rothschild is billeted in the village in a milliner's establishment, and whenever he asks for even a jug of hot water, it is only brought to him after a grave family council and such a high-pitched discussion between the old brother and his five sisters, all of whom are stone deaf, that one can hear it in the street.

Thursday: 2*nd.*

The *Temps* published a recent letter from Kipling, speaking of his visit to France and the impressions he gained from it.

"It was a revelation, an experience which surpasses any description in words—and one of which I am extremely proud. It makes me feel I want to bow before every Frenchman I meet—though this is perhaps something that might be misunderstood."

The Italian front is very active.

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The Austrians, during their retreat, are devastating the whole country.

Sunday: 5th.

There is peace-talk mediation by the Pope, Cardinal Gibbons, and Mr. Wilson, but prudent reserve is generally maintained. They want to "manage" both Germany and the Allies—a pretty difficult thing—at the present time, anyway.

The Prince of Wales is in the trenches.

The Tommies are delighted, and writing home about it.

Monday: 6th.

Yesterday was the anniversary of the Battle of the Marne, and it was celebrated at Meaux in the presence of an enormous crowd, the cathedral being resplendent with the colours of the Allied armies.

My long isolation (in 1914) left me in ignorance for more than a month of this splendid feat of arms, and the fact that I first heard of it from our allies, who seemed so happy to be able to tell me of it, made them more than ordinarily "sympathique" to me from the first.

Tuesday: 7th.

Owing to the approaching wedding, I am settled in Paris for the moment.

My stock of clothes being very low, I have ordered a dress for the occasion, which I hope to be able to wear again when, God willing, we celebrate Victory—that is, if fashions have not changed by then!

Thursday: 9th.

Our Allies are being tried at sea.

The *Hesperian*, an English mailboat, has been sunk, and two French steamers torpedoed, one at the mouth of the Gironde, the other near Belle-Isle.

These two crimes have been committed, it is said, by the same submarine.

All my imagination has been busy thinking of possible

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inventions to prevent these catastrophes. There ought to be an "antidote," an instrument of defence against every instrument of attack!

Unfortunately a good many lives have always been lost before the instrument is invented.

Friday: 10*th.*

My dress for the wedding has arrived. I think I look very smart in it.

One must do honour to America, and institute the Grand Alliance, by one more intimate—the union of the two families. I want to be a veritable French "Belle Mère."

Saturday: 11*th.*

Amaury has obtained leave to get married, but it is not for long.

He is going to Bordeaux to meet our travellers, and is frightfully anxious on account of the torpedoing at the mouth of the Gironde.

Some wedding presents have already arrived, and all is ready for the ceremony, fixed for the 15th, Wednesday, at the Town Hall at ten o'clock, and at the church at eleven o'clock. I mean, the Parish Church of St. Honoré d'Eylau, place Victor Hugo.

I have some lovely old lace, which I took to a dressmaker and had made up, Emilie, my daughter, acting as model for the fitting, as her figure is very much the same as that of her future sister-in-law. Then, while the bridal garments were being decided upon, I went to the church and Town Hall to see about the religious and civil ceremonies.

Tuesday: 14*th.*

Last night the Zeppelins attempted a raid on the English coast.

According to the German Press, Count Zeppelin directed operations in person during the recent attack on London.

Emily has arrived at the Ritz Hotel with her father and sister. I had made a rendezvous with all the smart

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dressmakers, and was anxious to know if my choice would be appreciated.

The two future sisters-in-law, Emily and Emilie, are exactly the same size. Dress, shoes, gloves, all fit Emily perfectly.

Amaury's sister has made the most excellent mannequin. We are invited tonight to a family dinner-party, very intimate, as far as is possible, at the Ritz.

Wednesday: 15*th.*

Following the wishes of the young couple, there were only aunts and uncles and the necessary witnesses present. In the parish, St Honoré d'Eylau, a strange legend had gained credence—namely, that the bridegroom had had both his legs amputated and that the marriage was to be by proxy. A maid who had seen Amaury as a child came, greatly upset, to find out if the story was true. Expecting to behold a mutilated cripple, she was delighted to see his long legs again!

After the wedding, Mr. Henry Sloane gave a big family breakfast at the Ritz Hotel, and afterwards there arrived an army of photographers, following the odious modern custom of fixing for eternity the absurd spectacle of a wedding—whether it be aristocratic or bourgeois.

The few days' leave which I allowed myself being over, I have come back here to my guests of the 3rd Corps.

Thursday: 16*th.*

The Zeppelins have been over England again and dropped bombs, but without any victims.

At the same time, our aeroplanes flew over Trèves and also dropped bombs.

And while the enemy sows death and destruction, life goes on, and there are happy people—witness our young couple, who left yesterday for an unknown destination, which, however, I can easily guess.

Barely one week of happiness and security, and then there will be two of us to watch the sky with anguish, asking ourselves if he, whom we both love, is running the risks of a bold flight over the lines, meeting the fire of an enemy aeroplane or of their barrage below!

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Friday: 17*th.*

Yesterday the *Temps* commented on speeches made by the English M.P., Mr. Hodge, and Mr. Smith at Brest yesterday.

They have both undertaken a lecturing tour in France. At Brest Mr. Hodge has affirmed the greatness of the English military and civil effort to aid France and martyred Belgium.

It is to be hoped that those neutrals who are watching this formidable duel with curious, or even indifferent, eyes may come to France themselves at least morally at the side of those who are fighting for Right and who have been the victims of an infamously unjust Fate.

Wednesday: 22*nd.*

The young couple have returned from their wedding trip, and, with Mr. Sloane, are coming to La Motte au Bois. In order to spare Mr. Sloane all the worries of continual change of trains, I decided to meet him by car at Boulogne.

Alas! the caprices of the motor, together with the inexperience of the chauffeur, entailed many stops on the road, and, in the end, the journey was longer than had we accepted the train route. Happily the weather is fine, and Mr. Sloane takes it all in good part, and his Scotch blood and humorous nature assert themselves.

Friday: 24*th.*

I have organized a lunch for Mr. Sloane and the young married couple. I have invited the most important of the Headquarters Staff. I have also invited Captain Raoul Duval, French Military Attaché of the 3rd Corps, and the two brothers de Noirmont, one of whom is in the French navy and the other in the army.

Saturday: 25*th.*

Amaury has rejoined his squadron at St. Idesbald, near La Panne. His short wedding trip is over. Emily is passing her nurse's exams. and will be attached to the ambulance station of Malo-les-Bains (near Dunkirk), commanded by the Countess Benoist d'Azy.

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Preparing for this, Amaury has rented a little villa, that they have called "Palmyre," after the old cook, who will be the only servant in the microscopic house! On stormy days, when flight is impossible, the near neighbourhood of the camp to Palmyre may permit of an ocasional discreet visit—but, hush! the censor has long ears!

Monday: 27th.

The British have had another success,[1] and taken 8,000 prisoners and much war material; 8,000 Germans were left dead or wounded on the battlefield as the result of this impetuous attack, in which the Tommies were given as their objective two iron towers (connected with the coal mines). They at once called them "Tower Bridge." The thought of defending their homes surely inspired this name and furnished them with their magnificent élan.

Tuesday: 28th.

Amaury writes to me that his aeroplane, a Maurice Farman, has arrived, and that he has tested it by flying for two hours over Cassel.

He describes his feelings looking down on the high road that leads from Cassel to La Motte au Bois and that he has followed so often on a carriage or a car—little dreaming that one day he would have such a different means of locomotion.

The fine intervals lately have been rare, and we have had a series of storms very unsuitable for flying. I am not sorry; Amaury won't be up so often. What a coward I am!

OCTOBER, 1915

Sunday: 3rd.

Amaury took an observer with him one day to make a sketch of the floods of the Yser.

The weather was splendid, and they had a superb view of the sea and the dunes.

[1] Loos.

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He is revealing himself, not only as a pilot, but also as a photographer—a trade he can continue in peace-time, and which will be quite paying, if he doesn't find something more interesting to do!

Tuesday: 5th.

The papers publish the despatch of Field-Marshal French, who recapitulates the operations of the big battle begun on the 25th September, and he ends thus:

"I desire to bear witness to the army I command how much I appreciate the magnificent work it has accomplished, and I return my sincere thanks for the fine command of Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and those commanders of Army Corps and Divisions under his orders during the principal attacks.

"With the same feeling of gratitude and admiration, I wish to note particularly the splendid dash, the indomitable courage, and the stubborn tenacity of the troops. I have every confidence and assurance that this same ardour, so remarkable in the first phases of the battle, will be crowned by final and complete victory."

Besides this, King George V. has sent a telegram of congratulation to Field-Marshal French on the success which has accompanied the efforts of his valiant soldiers since the beginning of the attacks.

These congratulations are well deserved, for all the soldiers of the immense Empire are rivalling in ardour and tenacity their French comrades in arms—that they hold in high esteem.

Thursday: 7th.

One of our airships, which left on a bombarding expedition, has not returned to its port. The crew are supposed prisoners.

Let us hope that their fate may be less painful than that of our cavalry and infantry, who are suffering, not only from the food shortage in Germany, but from the bad treatment they are experiencing in the concentration camps. Rumour says that there is among aviators such a spirit of comradeship that all who fall within the German lines are treated with deference and courtesy!

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In this way several families have received, dropped from an enemy aeroplane, details of the death of some of their relations, or of their being in hospital on the high road to recovery.

Friday: 15*th.*

Amaury has permission to spend a few hours at La Motte au Bois with Emily and Mr. Sloane.

The weather is lovely and the meeting was very pleasant. If it had not been for the boom of cannon now and then, or the sound of a bomb from an aeroplane out amusing itself, we might have thought it was peace-time! As for all the khaki uniforms everywhere, they seem so much part of the country that they no longer change its appearance.

Saturday: 16*th.*

A squadron of Zeppelins made a raid on Wednesday over the East Coast of England and over London.

It is the most murderous there has been up to now; there were 56 people killed and 114 wounded. The inhabitants of London demand immediate reprisals against Germany, though they are not in the least frightened.

Shall we find means to fly over Berlin and sow terror there?

It is really time to repay these monsters in their own coin, to destroy their clumsy monuments, and teach their civilians by what means their army, aided by their industries, tries to damage the morale of the Allies—though without success.

Wednesday: 20*th.*

The Swiss are indignant! A German aeroplane has dropped bombs near Chaux-de-Fonds, with the evident intention of destroying the railway. Was it an error on the part of the aeroplane, which was an Aviatik?

The inquiry will prove it, but the damage is slight. Regrettable, of course, but a little "breakage" may make this neutral think.

I hear that the brigade to which Amaury was attached

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before he joined the Flying Corps has covered itself with glory.

It carried the farm of Navarrin, but it has lost half its effectives. One of Amaury's most charming friends, Captain Bleuze, was killed, and 60 officers have disappeared, a colonel among them.

This carries out Amaury's ideas about Destiny.

He might have met *his* death in this attack, and I should never have forgiven myself for having prevented him going into the Flying Corps, where perhaps Fate will be less cruel.

Thursday: 28*th.*

On the 25th, the King of England and the President of the Republic met at the front and passed in review the British troops, admiring their fine appearance. On the following day, the 26th, the King visited our army, and sent to General Joffre a message of congratulation on our soldiers.

The President has also given the Croix de Guerre to the Prince of Wales, who has remained at the front since the beginning of hostilities.

The French ribbon is in its place on the tunic of this sympathetic and charming young Prince, whose presence in the midst of the fighters is an encouragement. They feel suffering, danger, and risk less when they see this young figure appearing unexpectedly and at any point along the line.

Sunday: 31*st.*

King George has been the victim of a riding accident.

The horse, alarmed by the cheering which greeted the Sovereign, reared and fell, throwing the King, who was picked up and taken to a car, which left immediately.

Replying to a telegram from the Lord Mayor of London, the Queen sent her thanks, saying the King's condition was satisfactory.

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NOVEMBER, 1915

Thursday: 4th.

Mr. Asquith has been reviewing the political situation in the House of Commons.

He insists especially on complete agreement with France.

All this has produced a great impression in England.

On the other hand, the report published in June by Field-Marshal French on the operations insists on the closeness of collaboration between France and England, so important a factor for final success.

Is this a step towards a single command? So desirable a thing, from every point of view.

Friday: 5th.

We have a new Minister, Briand.

The declaration read in the Chamber and Senate has been very favourably received.

Political struggles ought to give way before the urgency of national defence, and private interest efface itself for the public weal. One needs a little of the first ardour for solidarity so evident at the beginning of the war. It might help to hurry the march of events and turn them in our favour.

Wednesday: 10th.

Queen Mary passed in review the troops on Salisbury Plain, replacing the King.

The Prince of Wales is again in France.

The British Royal Family is giving a fine example of activity, which is only equalled by the zeal of the King and Queen of the Belgians, who, in the last bastion of defence in their territory—the little "island" of the dunes of La Panne—are holding on valiantly without regard to the attacks to which they are exposed both from aeroplanes and submarines along the coast.

Monday: 15th.

We hear so many reports, but one wonders how things are really going. They say that Dixmude is nothing

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but a heap of stones by now. There has been terrible fighting round Ypres; a fortnight ago the 1st British Army Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, repulsed an attack by the Prussian Guards before Ypres, and the army is still talking of the way in which the London Scottish charged the enemy three times in succession with admirable sangfroid when Messines was taken.

Today one of the officers here came to me saying he would give me a real treat. He handed me a copy of *The Times*, where he had marked an article showing British appreciation of the French command. I see that the Battle of Flanders cost 800,000 enemy lives, and it has undoubtedly established the reputations of Joffre and Foch. Owing to brilliant leadership, say the papers, the Allies were able to hold their own against an opposing force three times as large.

Thursday: 18*th.*

Four English Ministers are in Paris—Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Balfour, and Mr. Lloyd George.

They have already had discussions at the French Foreign Office with their French colleagues. I have always believed more in deeds than words in the crisis through which we are passing, but if the meeting of these learned personages leads to a closer understanding of the decision to be taken, I shall be the first to rejoice in the visit of the British Ministers to our good town of Paris, where certainly they will find amusement for their leisure, if not occupation during business hours.

Friday: 19*th.*

The hospital ship *Anglia* struck a mine and sank in the Channel. Sailors and nurses showed splendid devotion.

This news has saddened all England, and it is a pain shared by French hearts, ready to feel the sorrows of their friends. However much I feel the need of some sort of vengeance every time our Allies are the victims of some cruel act of war, yet I cannot desire to think of one of our mines blowing up a German hospital ship,

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or French aeroplanes dropping bombs on a Red Cross ambulance.

No; the wounded man, whoever he may be or under whatever flag he may serve, is a noble victim, and no man or brutal act should touch him.

I am leaving for Paris to say good-bye to Mr. Sloane, who is returning to America. Although we are the gainers by what he is leaving to our affection, I feel sad for him, thinking of the sacrifice he has made in giving up the charming companion he had in his daughter—and especially when I think of what anxiety he must feel in leaving her in a country so threatened, and pretty well aware of the real danger to which she is exposed.

Thursday: 25th.

I have just returned to La Motte au Bois with Emily, her father having sailed.

We are enjoying having Amaury on leave.

With most admirable trust the young couple are making plans for their home "after the war." What a fine faith in the future, with no apprehension of seeing the line drawing nearer and threatening the old home!

It is amusing to hear them discussing plans for changes, inside and out. The first work will be a terrific clean-up—that is, if the enemy don't make a clean sweep of everything by new methods of destruction.

If ever there is a hasty retreat, they will destroy everything that they have had so much trouble to conquer.

DECEMBER, 1915

Wednesday: 1st.

The British Admiralty communicates the following:

"Sub-Lieutenant Viney, of the British Navy, accompanied by the French Lieutenant de Sinçay, patrolling the Belgian Coast, dropped bombs on a German submarine, which sank in a few minutes."

You could not find a better example of brothers-in-arms than these two officers of our fighting forces drop-

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ping the bomb neatly—a symbol of the union of our arms and our countries.

Monday: 6th.

We are very anxious about the prisoners from our village, who are very unhappy in Germany. There are seventeen from La Motte au Bois. As far as one can understand from their heavily censored letters, they are in need of everything. Emily is organizing, with help from America, a regular supply of clothes and provisions to be sent to them.

There is another Franco-British conference being held —a deliberation on burning questions of the hour.

Wednesday: 15th.

Yesterday Amaury threw down on Lille newspapers and addresses of some of the refugees, for the information of those unhappy families anxious to know the fate of their relatives.

He chose laundries to drop them on (the drying-grounds), for two reasons—the first being that the white paper showed less when it fell on sheets, etc., and the second that the numerous washer-women spread all news with a positively devastating rapidity!

His observer, an officer whose family is in Lille, was overjoyed to see below him the fortifications of Vauban which surround the town.

Both going and coming, Amaury flew over Bailleul and Armentières, and saluted the clearing of La Motte au Bois, where his mother, unwarned, was ignorant that the great bird flying overhead was sending her greetings and bearing within it all she has most dear in the world.

Wednesday: 22nd.

The weather is frightful, impossible for flying, so Amaury writes that he is filling in his time by writing New Year's letters. The fact that he is performing this family duty is a proof, he says, that war develops courage!

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He will be unable to get leave for the 1st of January to pass it with his wife, as his comrades have theirs promised—so he asks me to go to Malo-les-Bains, so that Emily won't feel too lonely. I shall leave in a few days, then, to join her there.

Saturday: 25th.

Before leaving today I was presented with a magnificent silver tray by Major Brinton on behalf of the Cavalry Corps.

All the officers who have been my guests wanted to subscribe—even those now far away on the Eastern fronts.

Here is a list of the names on the tray.

Major Brinton was charged to write to each man for his signature, which a silversmith has engraved around a very charming dedication, recalling the sojourn of the British Cavalry Corps at La Motte au Bois.

Christmas, 1915.

PRESENTATION TO BARONESS DE LA GRANGE

Lieutenant-General Hon. J. H. G. Byng (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).
Lieutenant-General E. H. H. Allenby (Headquarters, 3rd Army).
Major-General G. de S. Barrow (Headquarters, 1st Indian Cavalry Division).
Brigadier-General J. F. N. Birch (Headquarters, 1st Corps).
Brigadier-General H. A. Tagart (Headquarters, 3rd Army).
Brigadier-General H. D. White-Thomson (Headquarters, 27th Division).
Brigadier-General P. Howell (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).
Colonel J. C. G. Longmore (C.C.).
Surgeon-General M. O'Keeffe (C.C.).
Colonel R. Hutchinson (General Staff, G.H.Q.).
Colonel O. K. Chance (Headquarters, 2nd Cavalry Division).
Major A. M. Henley (Headquarters, 49th Division).

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Major J. C. Brinton (C.C.).
Major G. W. G. Hughes (R.A.M.C., 3rd Cavalry Division).
Major H. F. Fraser (Headquarters, 3rd Army).
Major G. C. Buxton (6th Cavalry Brigade, 3rd Cavalry Division).
Captain P. Laurie (C.C.).
Captain A. E. Paget (2nd Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division).
Captain E. S. Chance (4th Cavalry Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division).
Captain J. G. L. Howard (C.C.).
Lieutenant J. R. V. Sherston (C.C.).
Captain R. Baggallay (11th Hussars, 1st Cavalry Division).
Captain J. Arnott (15th Hussars, 1st Cavalry Division).
Lieutenant Sir B. Brooke (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).
Lieutenant Lord Titchfield (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).
Lieutenant Lord Dalmeny (Headquarters, 3rd Army).
Lieutenant E. S. Agnew (Headquarters, 3rd Army).
Lieutenant A. Capel (C.C.).
Lieutenant de Lubersac (C.C.).
Lieutenant K. Waldenstrom (2nd Cavalry Division).

Sunday: 26th.

On the 20th the Germans attacked our British allies. They rose up suddenly from the trenches, great masses of foot soldiers with fixed bayonets and hand grenades, crossing the fifty yards of trenches which separated them from the English lines.

The Indians, in spite of a stubborn resistance, were obliged to give ground. The English rushed to their help, but were borne down by weight of numbers.

It was then, according to a correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, that two regiments of French Territorials came to their help and flung themselves into the mêlée. Men were struggling with the enemy, men of all nationalities, impossible to distinguish who was in the desperate struggle, using knives, grenades, bombs, bayonets, and without a single gunshot they repulsed the enemy, reconquered the lost trenches, and retook Givenchy, where they found

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a good many of their old comrades having eluded the flood of retreating Germans, who were too busy seeking a surer position to search the cellars.

An Amsterdam telegram says that on Christmas Eve the Kaiser was making merry when an Allied squadron came to trouble the feast.

The Emperor left the table in a very bad temper. Quite understandable, at least!

Dunkirk has had seventeen bombs from aeroplanes, while the market was in full swing.

There were several victims, especially women.

Such acts of gallantry are difficult to describe in suitable language!

Tuesday: 28th.

This month the enemy have used a great deal of gas, and the artillery has been very active. Cannon and munitions have been arriving in enormous quantities from England, and the British Army, well conditioned and with well-trained gunners—the "contemptible little army" of the beginning—has been considerably developed. Field-Marshal French, who has raised so many men, disciplined them, and sent them to the front, has been given the title of Viscount French of Ypres. This is a good deal criticized in Belgium, the title being a Belgian one, and only really in the power of the Belgian King to bestow. But as for me, remembering the valiant efforts of the British Army, Field-Marshal French could have taken the title of Viscount French of La Motte au Bois or Duke of Hazebrouck—I should not have minded!

I must mention another Christmas present I have had. The 3rd Army Corps have given me a charming silver inkstand, with a flattering inscription. Really, although I am no longer exactly young, I feel I am the spoiled child of the British Army! This inkstand and the tray will go down as family heirlooms.

Wednesday: 29th.

At a review of the Indian Army Corps, the Prince of Wales gave them a message from the King congratulat-

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ing them on the exploits of the past year and thanking them for their courage and loyalty. He ended with these words:

"I pray God to bless you, to keep you, and to bring you home safe and sound after the final victory, where you may be received with honour by your fellow-countrymen."

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JANUARY, 1916

Saturday: 1*st.*

How delightful it is to be spending New Year's Day like this quietly together in this little house at Malo-les-Bains. As the weather is extremely bad we have other hopes of an apparition[1] arriving discreetly—a hope which, if it materializes, will have something of the charm and savour of forbidden fruit!

Palmyre, the fat cook, is busy with delicious dishes, whose savoury smells tickle our nostrils agreeably, and the longed-for apparition, satisfyingly solid, really does appear to preside at his own table.

This happens often on days of squall when the great birds are safely housed in their shed.

Tuesday: 4*th.*

New Year's Day gave the Allies a chance to confirm anew their solidarity.

There was an exchange of telegrams between King George and M. Poincaré, and between Sir Douglas Haig and General Joffre.

All are full of confidence and hope.

As the authorities give us the example, we, too, humble civilians as we are, really knowing very little of passing events, may face the future without too great anxiety. Yet it is impossible sometimes not to feel a chill of apprehension before this frightful struggle against a redoubtable foe, who is employing such means of destruction as would have seemed incredible between civilized nations.

They are very busy in England with military conscription. Mr. Asquith in the Commons and Lord Kitchener in the Lords have made important announcements.

However magnificent the first general voluntary

[1] My son, Amaury, Baron de La Grange.

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response to the call to arms, the possible length of the conflict has to be considered, and the whole country is now called upon to contribute its full fighting power.

When one thinks how contrary this is to the tradition of personal liberty in Great Britain, one realizes that our allies know that for them, too, it is now a question of life and death.

Thursday: 6th.

I am back with my big British family.

I find it diminished, as some are away for New Year's leave, while others are just returning to the daily work.

I, too, have had my leave and must take up my task again.

Sunday: 16th.

We hear that Cardinal Mercier has been very well received in Rome.

This reception shows sympathy, not only with the person of the Archbishop, but with his noble country, and shows a feeling of benevolence in the Pope towards the Allies which hitherto had not been publicly manifested.

The exceptional cruelties of which the Allies have been the victims, and which have exceeded anything previously considered as "legitimate" war deeds, have probably determined the Holy Father to take the side of the oppressed.

Sunday: 23rd.

A rather amusing incident has recently happened here. Among my guests is a certain charming officer, whom I often invite to my table and who is a great frequenter of my library.

On the morning of the 21st, before I had left my room, I was surprised to hear a violent knocking at my door, and when I opened it, to see this gentleman in very early morning attire. He seemed in a state of agitation, and the cause was soon explained.

He had arrived the night before and had smuggled his wife into La Motte au Bois! The husband had per-

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suaded his wife to jump into the car, instructing her to hide under the fur rug every time the car stopped at one of the military posts scattered along the road. All went well, and they arrived at midnight, when the lady took refuge in her husband's room. But the next day considerable embarrassments arose for the culprits. The orderly was almost due to knock at the door to call his officer. The lady must not be seen, and the distracted husband had rushed to implore me to act the magician and perform a sort of vanishing trick with his wife!

After a moment's stupefaction I pulled myself together and inquired where his room was in the château. I found it adjoined one formerly occupied by my daughter on the second floor. I hurried to my daughter's room, which comes within the bounds of my side of the house, unlocked the door of communication, and found myself face to face with a charmingly pretty, fair woman.

Clothes and toilet articles were flung hastily from one room to the other, and, when I came up a little later to see the pretty intruder, I found her no longer in the dainty kimono in which I first saw her, but in travelling attire no less attractive.

"Hunger draws the wolf from his lair," and the lady accepted my invitation to breakfast. We got on excellently, and I was not surprised at the risks run by the husband for so pretty a wife!

Before lunch, however, the husband came and told me that the military authorities had "smelt a rat" and were on the track of the fugitive. The telephone was ringing incessantly, giving orders for her return.

I proposed waiting an hour to take advantage of the Staff being at lunch to speed my fair prisoner on her way, and to see that she lunched, too, before leaving, when, unexpectedly, a superior officer of the English G.H.Q. arrived! Chance or not, it was awkward. I did not intend to make any introduction and received the colonel rather curtly. He, by nature a gallant man, was evidently wondering who on earth this pretty person could be, and spoke to her in several languages, hoping for an introduction. As he obtained no replies

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he presently retired. Directly after we had swallowed a hasty and frugal meal, we jumped from the window into the kitchen garden at the risk of breaking our necks, and, hurrying along under cover of the trees in the park, we reached the car waiting on the road, and I saw my imprudent young visitor whirled away beyond the forbidden zone!

Friday: 28th.

Since Emily came on the 25th, we have been visiting in Hazebrouck. We went to the Auxiliary Hospital No. 6, where they lack an operating table. My daughter-in-law proposed getting it from American charitable funds. The offer was gratefully accepted. We visited the farmers and the village people, and Emily takes a great interest in the nun's workroom. Since the war the girls have worked exclusively for the armies.

FEBRUARY, 1916

Thursday: 3rd.

Six or seven Zeppelins have been bombarding England again. There are many victims: 54 killed and 67 wounded.

The towns of Liverpool, Nottingham, and Sheffield have all suffered from explosive and incendiary bombs.

Some of the worthy Tommies have been telling me of their anxieties.

They hear the bad news by telegram and then remain in ignorance of the fate of their families in the towns attacked.

Their people at home, in their turn, endure the same worry, reading of the attacks in sectors where they know son or husband to be.

So everyone lives in a state of cruel uncertainty.

Friday: 11th.

The Germans are revenging themselves on La Panne for the incursions of the Allies into their lines.

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GENERAL SIR WILLIAM PULTENEY, LORD HAMILTON OF DALZELL, AND A.D.C., FEBRUARY, 1916

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The neighbourhood of the Belgian Royal Family requires incessant vigilance on the part of the French and Belgian Flying Corps, and Amaury is up whenever weather permits.

Saturday: 12*th.*

The intense cold continues, and the Staff officers, deprived of their usual sports, are replacing them by another sort of exercise. General Pulteney gives the example, and armed with a shovel, he throws himself passionately into the absorbing occupation of shovelling snow in the avenues and clearing the courtyard! The officers made a snow woman—a statue of me—just opposite my window, and while they were at mess I looked out some old clothes—feathered hat, a parasol, and shawl, skirt, and boots—and dressed it up. Unluckily, they were delayed, and a ray of warm sunshine—like that of Austerlitz—shining upon my image melted it piteously, and when the officers arrived they only found a pathetic heap of snow and old garments! A shell could not have wrought greater destruction on its objective, but great was the amusement of my guests in fishing out the sorry " glad rags " from the snow.

Emily has gone back to Malo-les-Bains, and we are going to meet in Paris for the wedding of my nephew, Alexis de l'Epine. It is rather romantic, this marriage! He met Mademoiselle Brémard on a trip to the Norwegian fiords in July, 1914. On the declaration of war, the boat, which was German, refused to land French passengers of military age, and, of course, Alexis came into this category. The Italian Ambassador happened to be among the travellers, and by his intervention Alexis got back to France via Holland, though not without difficulty.

He heard no more of the young girl until, badly wounded, he recognized, in her nurse's dress, the girl he had left in Norway! She had not forgotten him, and now, as he is well, there is to be the wedding on the 17th.

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Tuesday: 15*th.*

I am a woman who is exceedingly fond of her personal belongings—furniture and the like. Perhaps I love them too much!

Yesterday while in the park I noticed a mirror, evidently mine, fixed up in the branches of a tree. "Now who," thought I, "can be the lunatic, even among Englishmen—notoriously original—who goes up a tree to shave on a bitter February morning?"

Feeling my temper rising and determined to have my property respected, I turned back, and, meeting the General, expressed my indignation at once. He listened attentively and promised to inquire into the matter. I have now had the explanation. My fascinating friend, Lord Hamilton, always busy with inventions and experiments, has had an idea that he can perfect a system of reflectors to look into enemy trenches when they are very near. Acting upon this notion, he bought a glass in Hazebrouck—one exactly like mine—so the mirror really was "honestly come by," and is Lord Hamilton's own property.

The Staff now considers me a marvellously good housekeeper to have "spotted" such a thing, but since I realized these British Army ambitions, I have dreamed of little mirrors passing their secrets from one to another.

Tuesday: 22*nd.*

Yesterday, the 21st February, Madame Réjane, whose son, Jacques Porel, is an interpreter with the British Army, came here to see him. She passed forty-eight hours under my roof, and was gracious enough to recite us passages from *Madame Sans-Gêne* and the *Blue Bird.*

I invited all the General Staffs and officers in the district, and it was a great success. The main staircase, which goes from the entrance hall up to the first floor, formed the auditorium, and the officers sat there, pretty well packed, producing a general effect of beautifully cleaned boots and a background of khaki, among which showed up here and there a rare French "cornflower."

The High Command surrounded Madame Réjane, to do her honour, but I did happen to notice that she cast

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a friendly glance now and then in the direction of the younger officers of the Staff!

Wednesday: 23rd.

I have just escorted Madame Réjane to Boulogne-sur-Mer, where she was going to catch her train.

It was frightfully cold. The road, under a coating of frost and ice, was as slippery as glass.

At every turn of the wheels I expected an accident.

It happened—but, luckily, when I was returning alone! We just glided neatly and gently into the ditch, but, once there, it was a problem to get out.

Then, providentially, a British lorry appeared on the horizon.

I made frantic signs to stop the driver, who told me, however, he was urgently needed at headquarters.

As I have good friends there, I was soon able to persuade him that his first duty was to pull my car, lying on its left side, out of the ditch.

A big pull, and my car was out and running in a moment, as by miracle.

Then, with an eye to possible further accidents, I suggested that the lorry should follow rather than precede me.

Thus escorted, we arrived at headquarters, where I personally explained the reason of the lorry's delay.

Friday: 25th.

The members of the two Houses of Parliament now in Paris from London went to the statue of Jeanne d'Arc (place des Pyramides), and placed on it a palm, with the inscription:

"This palm is the symbol of the complete reconciliation of the two countries at the hour when the two peoples, united in the same sentiment of veneration for the heroine of old France, are defending together the liberty of the world."

Saturday: 26th.

Amaury is worrying about me under the continual air raids here. He writes amusingly:

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"I am under no illusions as to air bombardments. The person or place aimed at is rarely in danger, but any careless airman, letting his bomb drop without looking, *may* kill someone or hit a house!"

We are making the acquaintance of new visitors—the Albatross aeroplanes—the very latest built by the Germans. You hear them humming like great hornets or drones, and then the engines stop while they drop their cargoes.

MARCH, 1916

Friday: 3rd.

All the papers seem to regard the present fighting at Verdun as a battle of giants.

Even the German Press seems to estimate at their true value our soldiers' exploits. The German Staff are beginning to realize that their army is not the only "invincible."

They thought they were to march into Paris almost without a blow. But the ardour and spirit of initiative of the French soldier are worth more than the passivity and mechanical obedience of their men. They are like the masses of the deep, open sea. We are the waves that break everlasting and eat away the shingle and the rocks.

Sunday: 5th.

I have had a little trip to Malo-les-Bains, where Amaury was able to come for a few hours. He flew yesterday to a height of 2,500 metres, and for two hours was nearly frozen.

He has received news from his old friend of Chartres, Captain de Saint-Sauveur, who seems to be the barometer of the offensive.

He is going to take command of a squadron near Verdun, awaiting the day of the great German attack.

This is what Amaury calls "being in luck." Personally, it is not exactly the "luck" I wish for him.

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Tuesday: 7th.

Mr. Warner Allen, a war correspondent of the British Press, has been authorized to visit Verdun, and has written an account of his experiences, which is reproduced by the *Temps*.

"According to him (Mr. Warner Allen)," says this paper, "victory or defeat in this battle, the greatest of the war, depends upon a little strip of ground not eight kilometres long, between the hill of the Poivre and the Plain of Douaumont. On this ground the French have all they need on their side, and are sure of success."

It is good hearing to have this from an English friend.

Wednesday: 8th.

The Zeppelins have again been over the counties of York, Norfolk, Essex, and Kent, bombarding the country as they passed over.

The victims, as usual in these useless military raids, have been mostly women and children.

The Germans, by pursuing these barbarous methods, will force us into similar reprisals.

More and more will diabolical inventions of destructive engines be sought, and this one is forced to call "progress."

Friday: 10th.

I have had my little grandsons, Olivier and Jacques, here for a few days. They have had a great success with the officers, who adore children. Captain Michael Wemyss often comes to play on my piano; he is a very good musician. He is most amusing to watch when playing, as he performs a series of gymnastics with all his person, not merely with his fingers. He is particularly fond of the two boys, and takes them up on his saddle.

Wednesday: 15th.

The 3rd Corps is leaving me.

General Pulteney and his officers have just been to bid me farewell.

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Who will be my new guests? Whence will they come, and will they be as agreeable as their predecessors?

Up to now I have had no cause of complaint—except for the big "cleans" necessary between the departure of one lot and the arrival of another. I am always offered orderlies for this job, but I know by now how much this offer is worth!

Tommy has a marvellous gift for making work as he works!

He deposits dust as he sweeps, and stains when he dusts, so I prefer to dispense with his service!

Saturday: 18*th.*

The German onrush at Verdun continues. Every day agonizing news arrives about this great struggle in history.

The news is sometimes contradictory, but the wonderful courage and dash of our troops are always the same.

The resignation of General Galliéni is announced. His health is failing, and he has had to have a surgical operation.

But, in reply to the General's letter, Briand expresses the hope that he may soon be able to return to his post and continue to serve his country. It was thanks to his fine initiative when Paris was threatened that our capital was saved.

Who will ever forget that idea of genius which mobilized all the taxi-cabs of Paris to carry up to the lines the last reserves of our man-power!

It was this act that turned the tide at the eleventh hour. The enemy fell back like an ebbing sea, and has never since been able to recover the lost ground or prestige.

They were obliged to entrench themselves in positions which freed Paris from danger of attack.

Wednesday: 22*nd.*

General Joffre has received a message from General Haig (Commander-in-Chief of the British Army), in which he expresses his admiration for the heroic ex-

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ploits of the French Army round Verdun—where Germany is hurling all its strength against the indomitable soldiers of France.

General Joffre has expressed his warm appreciation of the message.

Saturday: 25th.

Emily has let me know that Amaury has come back safe and sound from a dangerous flight over the enemy lines. His aeroplane was struck by twenty-eight pieces of shrapnel, one of his controls was cut, and the piece of wood on which the whole machine rests was reduced in thickness by so much that it was a marvel it did not break and cause the crash of the plane.

Once again he has evidently been protected by Providence. I cannot thank God enough.

Monday: 27th.

The Channel mailboat, the *Sussex*, carrying 380 passengers has been torpedoed. It is believed there are about 50 victims, some of them American.

The American Ambassador in Germany is already instructed to inquire if it was a German submarine which torpedoed the *Sussex*. The result of this inquiry may easily lead to a great change in American public opinion, and turn it completely in our favour.

Friday: 31st.

Today I had this delightful letter from the French officer attached to the 3rd Corps. It seems probable that my memories and experiences of the war will have more in common with the British than the French Armies, from force of circumstances.

Here is the letter in question:

27th March, 1916.

MADAME,

It is with the liveliest regret that I left La Motte au Bois without paying my respects to you. An unlucky chance, which I deplore, obliged me to leave for less pleasant places on the very day that you came back. I am therefore obliged to confide to this official note-

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paper (all I have at the moment) the thanks that I should have liked to express in person. Please believe that I shall never forget your unceasing kindness and gracious welcome. To someone once trying to analyze the charm of your hospitality I replied that, to my idea, it was the outcome of four qualities, each alone very rare, and, united, as difficult to find as the four-leaved clover that Abdullah consecrated his life to find. Those qualities are intelligence, wit, supreme distinction, and kindness.

I have passed exquisite hours at La Motte au Bois, and hope some day to return. "Hope," they say, "is a decoy!"

Nevertheless, as the Italian poet says:

"I know, alas! that Hope is oft
Nought but an airy dream,
A Fantasy and not a Truth.
Things are not what they seem!

"But false or not,
While Hope is there,
Alluring as a sprite,
Though long the way of every day
In Hope there dwells Delight!"

Believe me, Madame, etc.

APRIL, 1916

Wednesday: 5th.

Three nights running the Zeppelins have made raids over England. One which took part in the attack was brought down and its crew interned.

If this misadventure damps their zeal a little, it will be all the better for us, but *amour propre* must prevent their stopping, and no doubt there will soon be other raids.

Thursday: 6th.

Lately there has appeared in the country a new branch of the British Army—fine, handsome, bronzed men, with a magnificent bearing and wearing very large hats.

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Some wear these picturesque "sombreros" tilted rakishly—these are Australians; others have red and green bands round them—these are New Zealanders.

Saturday: 8th.

Major Jack Churchill came to ask me to help him in the installation of the Staff of the 1st Anzacs. This word, which personifies those two fine Dominions, Australia and New Zealand, is composed of the first letters of the words *A*ustralia, *N*ew Zealand *A*rmy *C*orps.

Our new guests, then, are those soldiers, who, landing in Egypt, were sent to the hecatombs of Gallipoli, and all those who returned alive from that hell arrived here this spring, after having been reformed, following a rest on the Nile.

They are, it appears, extraordinarily tenacious troops.

I am assured that Gallipoli would never have been the grave of so many brave men had it not been that a diplomatic indiscretion at Athens gave the necessary information to the Kaiser, who replaced the Turkish officers at the Dardanelles forts by Germans.

It is said that the removed Turkish "defenders" paid with their heads! I write this story as it was told to me, and under all reserve.

While Major Jack Churchill was arranging the billets, curiosity took me to the gates of the park, from where I watched, at the turning of the road to Hazebrouck, the passing of the serried ranks—wave upon wave—of the most magnificent troops.

I saw the great flood of all these children of Oceania, one regiment succeeding another, with their teams of kicking, wicked-eyed mules shying at the disjointed-looking planks of the canal bridge, and then, under the vigorous application of the whip by the handsome fellow driving them, making a wild dash across the few yards of wood from one paved road to the other. With every team came the same scene—the sudden stop, the flinging up of clattering hoofs, the ringing sound on the cobbles, the rearing and plunging of the team, the mad bolt across the bridge, and the big felt hat of the driver flapping as they all disappeared round the bend of the

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road, only to give place to another lot like them. So passed after the cavalry the infantry, and then the artillery, with, finally, the travelling kitchens and their absurd little puffs of smoke like large pipes! Commissariat waggons and tools for repairs, etc., brought up the rear. Several of the regiments had their mascots. I noticed a white goat perched on a munition case, a monkey seated on the pommel of a saddle in front of the rider, and a dog marching at the head of a column, tail in air, with the appearance of commanding the regiment!

There was an officer near me watching this seemingly endless defile of troops and the comedy of the bridge, and he was evidently making the same observations as myself. We spoke to each other, and this charming man, correspondent of a New Zealand newspaper, is Mr. Malcolm Ross.

When I returned to the château, I found Captain Churchill putting tickets on the doors, on which were written the names of the officers of the 1st Anzacs. When he got to the "Blue Room;" also called the "Girls' Room," because it had been occupied by all my sisters-in-law in succession, he asked my leave to play a practical joke on one of the Generals, who happened to be a French-Canadian and who was to have the room now. The gentleman is of Norman descent, and his friends are going to make him believe that one of the pictures in the room was a portrait of an ancestor of his own!

Captain Churchill had described General Birdwood to me before he arrived, and when he did I found him most agreeable. Short, thin, active, quick, and energetic, with grey-blue eyes full of frank gaiety, this man had organized and disciplined the Australian Army, who, officers and men alike, adore him, knowing how they can count on his fatherly kindness. He has sustained and encouraged them all through the terrible ordeal of Gallipoli. General Birdwood is English, but his Chief of Staff, General White, is an Australian. He is tall and fair, and very distinguished in type.

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CAPTAIN SMITH, GENERAL CUNLIFFE-OWEN, CAPTAIN CHIRNSIDE, GENERAL WHITE, GENERAL JOLY DE LOTBINIÈRE, MAJOR JACK CHURCHILL.

1st Anzac Staff.

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Sunday: 9th.

The damp weather made a good fire acceptable, and on their arrival, after all the Staff had been introduced to me, we sat down to dinner. I had put General Birdwood on my left, and the "doyen" of the generals, General Joly de Lotbinière, an engineer, on my right.

I confess I had completely forgotten the projected practical joke, confided to me by Captain Churchill, when my right-hand neighbour began to express his pleasure at having discovered the portrait of one of his ancestors in the very first French château he had visited! (I was rather dazed at this.) He continued that, as his name was Joly de Lotbinière, he did not quite understand why the name on the portrait was "Bouffe" de Lotbinière (Churchill had put "bouffe" for "bouffon," jester or clown). As I had so completely forgotten the proposed joke and light appeared to be dawning rather slowly, I received several gentle kicks under the table (to my great astonishment, considering my previous ideas of the severity of Anglo-Saxon propriety and reserve!), but they had the desired effect, and I said: "Oh yes, it was quite likely, as I am of Norman descent on my mother's side, and probably we have ancestors in common."

This idea seemed to please him, and the subject of conversation changed. During the next silence, however, he reverted to it, and I was considerably taken aback by the unexpected and distinctly awkward question he addresed to me in his old Canadian-French accent.

"Tell me, Baronne," he asked, "how is it that I am descended from a Cardinal?" (The portrait is that of a Prince of the Church.) "I thought that in the Catholic religion priests never married."

All eyes were fixed on me and all waited expectantly to hear my reply. An inspiration for the honour of our national quick-wittedness was absolutely necessary.

"Ah!" I said, with all the coolness I could master, "I divine a drama there or, at least, a tragedy. When the great-great-grandmother died, after being the joy of the great-great-grandfather, and after giving him a

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large family, he probably nearly died of grief, and after seeing the children established in life, took orders, after which, no doubt, his brilliant intelligence raised him rapidly to the rank of cardinal."

It had never struck General de Lotbinière that a man could be first a husband and paterfamilias and then cardinal, and he was charmed at these particulars. But after another diversion, his mathematician's mind, still running on the subject, found another question.

"Madame," he said, "on the frame of the picture is a ticket with the date 1660, alongside the name. Who wrote it?"

Under this second attack my powers of invention nearly failed me, but I managed to express my conviction that my mother, the Marchioness de Chaumont-Quitry, anxious to keep green for future generations the memory of ancestors too quickly forgotten, had probably written it herself.

"Well, that's true," said de Lotbinière; "it looks like the handwriting of an old-fashioned grande dame."

(It is that of Captain Jack Churchill, who is being a good deal chaffed on the elegance of his "great lady" caligraphy!)

By now I was so exhausted by this exercise in mental gymnastics that I gave the signal to leave the table, and in the drawing-room more modern subjects than the cardinal came under discussion.

But, "He laughs best who laughs last!" And I am not quite sure of General Joly de Lotbinière, in spite of his appearance of bland credulity. I have, in fact, a strong suspicion that, as a good sportsman, he lets the boys have their joke! . . .

It has now been a question of organizing, perhaps for months, the installation of these new guests and beginning all over again the complicated task of the lodging of new troops, trying to preserve, at the same time, the agricultural interests of a richly productive country. Countrymen anywhere respect the land and love it. They know what it costs to plough the long furrows, and they know the price of the peasant's toil, the breeding of cattle, and the marketing of the hardly won

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products of nature! But these men have not quite the same feeling for the fowl-house, the wine-cellar, and the pretty girl, who is a good deal attracted by the amiable boyish gallantry of the big fellows in the big hats! (This hat, says tradition, is always tilted towards the shoulder on which the head of the fair one rests when the amorous couple roam absorbed in love's young dream!)

Wednesday: 12*th.*

Amaury said farewell to his old Farman by flying to La Motte au Bois.

Most unfortunately I missed him, as I was out visiting a brigade which was resting in the neighbourhood.

On my return I heard Amaury was received by General Birdwood's Staff with all due honour.

The French machine was guarded by two Australian sentries while the pilot had tea at the mess.

I found all the village in a state of enthusiasm at having seen "the Squire" landing and then starting again in the very small clearing in the forest.

"Just like a bird," say the worthy villagers.

Saturday: 15*th.*

I have been to Malo-les-Bains, where Emily showed me the crosspiece of wood which supported the whole of Amaury's machine on the day he was bombarded.

At least half the thickness had been carried away by a shell splinter.

One wonders how it was possible for what remains to have borne the weight of the machine and that of two men.

There are many complaints about the slowness of the Farman planes.

They are outdistanced by the great speed of the Albatross model and other German makes. A Farman specialist said it would be better to wait for another type of aeroplane before returning across the lines.

Amaury will get a short respite; after that, I don't think he will mind, for these expeditions into the enemy lines interest him very much.

While awaiting his new machine he will have time for another pacific and more agreeable expedition.

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Monday: 17*th.*

The Battle of Verdun is still being bitterly fought. General Pétain has congratulated the troops on their courage and their splendid attitude in a brief despatch.

It is fine, and ends with these simple words:

"Courage! We shall have them yet."

It is very French! Our Generals are not given to flowery phrases. They leave those to the politicians, and certainly the Chamber of Deputies is a more fitting theatre for them than the battlefield. For my part, I am much more interested in the fighting lines, and think they might suppress the Chamber without anyone missing it!

So the 3rd Army Corps has been replaced here by a Corps of Australians, and big felt hats can be seen in the country. We have many of these new guests from the Antipodes, and one sees them about our farms and fields, with their great mushroom hats, trying to make themselves understood by the Flemings.

Monday: 24*th.*

President Wilson has now sent a Note to the German Chancellery announcing that they must make their choice between a cessation of the criminal submarine warfare and a rupture of their relations with the United States.

In a session of Congress, the President explained the meaning of this Note on which depends peace or war between America and Germany.

The Americans have had to experience themselves something of the cruelty of Fate before they decided to come in. Up till now it has been a prudent neutrality!

Now that they have decided to join us Germany will see what will be the cost to her.

Tuesday: 25*th.*

The officers of the 1st Anzacs are charming people.

I find General Birdwood extremely "sympathique,"

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THE BARONESS ERNEST DE LA GRANGE AND GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD, APRIL, 1916

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and we are becoming real friends. He is, of course, an Englishman, but I get on as well with those who are native-born Australians, and the family life with the British Army goes on—no matter from what part of the Empire my guests hail.

An Australian war correspondent who was present at the evacuation of Gallipoli told me that General Birdwood, from the opening of the campaign against the Turks, had awaited the successive arrivals of the Anzac troops at Ismailia and had, with them, held the trenches in the peninsula that cost the sacrifice of so many lives. They showed me a photograph of Birdwood bathing in Suvla Bay, his head emerging from the sea, and a little way off a Turkish shell from the forts exploding harmlessly in the water.

At the moment of evacuation, General Monro, Commander-in-Chief of the British troops at Gallipoli, hurt his foot, and General Birdwood replaced him in his awkward task.

General Birdwood likes to tell stories showing the coolness and resourcefulness of the men from the Dominions under enemy fire and at most critical moments, especially when the only hope of saving the survivors was to keep the Turks in the dark as to the decision to evacuate.

The Anzacs did, indeed, do a marvellous bit of "camouflage."

The Allied troops had to pass, little by little, noiselessly, until only a curtain of some 10,000 men were left. The crucial point was to get this last to "fade away" without attracting the attention of the enemy. So prodigies of imagination were called into play! Automatic rifles were placed at certain distances to imitate "snipers," and all sorts of murderous surprises were put in the trenches, such as baskets of champagne to which were attached electric wires. The first eleven bottles could be drunk with impunity, but the twelfth, fastened to the wire, blew everything and everyone near up!

Gramophones, fully wound, charmed the Turks with operas, tangos, sonatas, ending with the Turkish

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National Anthem, only to blow up the listeners, rather a cruel finale for the poor devils listening to their war-like hymn coming from the "conquered" trenches!

But it was the vengeance of men exhausted by a long struggle under a coppery sky and a burning sun.

At last, when night fell, the Allies, in the silence of death, wrapped their feet in woollen coverings and, with a thousand precautions, slipped softly from the trenches, taking care not to dislodge a pebble nor strike against the least obstacle. They disappeared like creeping phantoms, gained the rear, still fearing to betray themselves by the tiniest error, and succeeded in this bold retreat which needed as much courage and coolness as an attack. The very animals seemed to understand the gravity of the occasion—donkeys, mules, and horses all showing entire docility in the difficult moment of embarkation, which was made at three different points. During this embarkation stores and huts were flaming, and the Turks, believing them to be camp-fires, wasted their munitions upon them!

General Birdwood was the last to leave the shore, where he stood watching the embarking of the survivors of that hecatomb.

Every living being gained the ships, then the General, with his horse and faithful standard-bearer, Faizula, went on board in their turn. During the night the transports gained the sea, and when the dawn broke the Anzac Staff, with the aid of their field-glasses, watched the horrible spectacle of the rush of the Turks to the abandoned trenches. Some of the automatic rifles were still exploding and firing their bullets towards the enemy. They advanced prudently at first, then, growing bolder, jumped into the chalky lines showing white on the horizon. Explosions and "plumes" of smoke here and there gave proof of the success of the manœuvre.

It was during this campaign that General Birdwood met General Gouraud, and these two fine soldiers were able to appreciate each other's value. General Gouraud received at Gallipoli the terrible wound which cost him an arm. It seems he was flung over a wall by the force

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of an explosion, and General Birdwood went to see him while he was on the stretcher.

One hundred and ten thousand men were kept during nine months in this unfortunate Gallipoli campaign. The troops resting were soon found to be as exposed as those in the trenches, as, by extending their range of fire, the Turks were able to reach them.

General Birdwood has been trained in a good school, as for years he was in India and served as Chief of Staff to Lord Kitchener.

The first up every day, I see him start off in the morning, wearing the big Australian hat out of compliment to his men. He comes back late from his tour of inspection of the trenches, generally having eaten nothing since the morning. Often I give the A.D.C. chocolate or a sandwich for his Chief, but nearly always General Birdwood makes his junior eat it! Hard on himself as to work and fatigue, he can ask much of his Anzacs, who, seeing him appear unexpectedly at notoriously dangerous corners, are proud to serve under his orders.

The Australian flag is a positive conundrum, with its mixture of Union Jack, the big star of the Dominion, and the little ones representing the five States.

Every man is a volunteer. In their big hats they sometimes wear a feather, that of the emu, symbol of their country. They are generally Socialists, and seem greatly surprised at the deference shown by the peasants to the château in a democratic country. They are good enough to say, however, "that the Baroness would convert the most ferocious Socialist!"

The reflections of these good-natured giants delight me, and I love talking to them.

General Birdwood also has under him an Indian cavalry brigade. I passed their camp the other day, and felt miserable to think of some of these brave men coming from the tropical heat of India to endure camp life in Flanders during the awful weather we have been having. Yet with what admirable enthusiasm they answered to Great Britain's call for help. Everywhere one hears praise of their bravery in battle. Some of these Indians were brought to La Motte au Bois the

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other day to be decorated for bravery, and I was glad to have a chance of getting a photograph of these allies from the East.

Sunday: 30th.

We do not often get news of Lille, but the story of the latest German iniquity has just filtered through. They have deported hundreds of women and girls, and even children, to Germany. What can have been the motive of this act of cruelty?

Relations between the U.S.A. and Germany are very strained, even critical.

German perplexity is great, American firmness is as great. So now they are measuring each other up and considering the pros and cons.

MAY, 1916

Friday: 5th.

The papers are giving details of the Irish Rebellion, its causes, and the men who fomented the movement. Marshal French has issued a communiqué saying that Dublin has returned to its ordinary life.

Communications between England and Ireland are almost normal again.

Whatever the cause, the rising has been prejudicial to our common weal, and it is heart-breaking that it should have occurred when we are suffering the terrible aggression of our enemies.

It is impossible in such chaos to define exact responsibility, but due honour should be given to the loyalist Irish Volunteers who, of their own accord, have enrolled in English regiments, fighting like Englishmen. Several Generals, too, both of Army and Corps, are men of Irish origin, and are capable and respected.

It has to be remembered, too, that the relations of these loyalist Volunteers who are left at home are exposed to the revenge and reprisals of the Sinn Feiners.

The War Office issues a communiqué today, saying that five enemy airships have attacked the North-East Coast of England and the South-East of Scotland.

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This makes the thirty-sixth time that the Zeppelins have attacked England.

Saturday: 6th.

The King of England has sent a telegram to the brave Irish troops and the police thanking them for the spirit of devotion they have shown during this great trial.

There is one—the King—who would do more than all the repressive measures. The King, the Queen, and the Princes have a great influence and are loved and respected by all.

Wednesday: 10th.

The Prince of Wales is on the Italian front and has visited different sectors in company with the King of Italy and the British Military Mission.

The war has brought about a very unexpected union before a common enemy in this uniting of Latin and Anglo-Saxon peoples. These two races, so different, are yet able to become allies in their common end—resistance to a German foe.

Perhaps the day may come when our enemies of today may become our allies, when our new enemy is one further away!

History has shown this happening so often.

How strange it would be if one day the Poilu, the Tommy, and the Fritz were all marching hand in hand against that spectre so often conjured up: "The Yellow Peril!"

The fifth German aeroplane has been brought down in this region since the beginning of the New Year.

Amaury writes that he chased 12 kilometres out to sea a big enemy machine which had just dropped bombs on Dunkirk. He must have another aeroplane. He says he sent bullets from about 50 metres, but that unfortunately the German machine accelerated and escaped him.

Amaury has all the technical work of the squadron. He trains the new pilots and tests the new machines. His Chief of Squadron, Walckenaer, is charming.

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Tuesday: 16*th.*

Today a big competition for tree-felling was organized between Australians, Canadians, English, and French. With the other countries presenting splendid-looking teams of youths, France, whose "poilus" are all holding other sectors, was handicapped, being represented only by an old man of at least seventy and two striplings of seventeen. But the old man was Flemish like the others, and, though arriving last, they brought down their tree so well that they received an ovation and had a prize. From the top of a rustic platform I distributed some bank-notes in envelopes.

This felling match was curious to watch. A Maori of New Zealand (Raratonga Island) attracted special attention. Instead of holding the axe by the end of the handle and swinging it above his head to bring it down heavily, he held it near the blade, and, with a short, often repeated movement, he chiselled the wood as if he were using a penknife! And the great tree fell in a few minutes exactly at the point he had chosen! He took the first prize.

It was sad to see the falling of our forest giants—fine oaks and elms in the full and delicate leaf of early summer. They reminded me as they fell of women with dishevelled hair—in all their pride of sap and foliage—and it was much more striking to the imagination than it would have been in winter, when the eye can hardly distinguish between dead and "sleeping" trees.

After the felling competition came the turn of the saw, and here the Canadians showed themselves masters of the craft. I admired their magnificent torsos and powerful arms giving the backward and forward movement, strongly and regularly, till the fine trunks were in two, three, or four pieces, the sap flowing from the wood and filling the air with the sweet odour of freshly cut bark.

I must note an anecdote very much to the credit of the natives of New Zealand and their chivalrous spirit as told to me by General Russell, their Commander. During the conquests of the islands the English ran out of ammunition, and the Maoris actually laid down their

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arms till their enemy had time to get up fresh supplies! A fine example to European civilization!

Friday: 19*th.*

From his squadron Amaury watched helplessly a raid on Dunkirk by German 'planes.

From the shore of St. Idesbald he watched the search-lights turned on the town, and, listening to the noise of the anti-aircraft guns, he thought of the little villa Palmyre, where a stray, careless bomb might always fall, and where he could not go to protect it.

Saturday: 27*th.*

I have had Leopold and Reginald de Croÿ here to lunch today. Reginald described to me how he managed to get out of the invaded districts and back here via Holland, and told me also of the captivity of his sister, Princess Marie de Croÿ. He is extremely anxious as to her fate, as she has been engaged on espionage work for the Allies. As a neighbour of our family at Sebourg, Reginald has several times seen my father-in-law and his son Louis, and spoke of the terrible hours they have already lived through!

Yesterday, after seeing that all was going well in the Auxiliary Hospital (where, indeed, with very slender resources, a great effort is being made), I decided to go on to Rousbrugge, where there is an ambulance given to General Hély d'Oissel by Mrs. Borden Turner, a charming American lady. She is associated with Mesdames Cravin and Dutreil of the Red Cross, and all three are under the direction of a doctor of the Faculty of Lyons. As I was turning the corner of the village of Ecke I perceived Baron de Montesquieu, a neighbour of my brother in Berri. He is with the Canadians and had just come out of the trenches, glad to be clear of them again.

At tea-time I got to Rousbrugge and inspected the ambulance in detail. It is very well organized—all the sheds being capable of being taken to pieces, with their planks numbered, etc. All accessories are in motor cars—sterilizers, electrical apparatus, heating appli-

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ances, light, and machinery for drying linen. Everything possible is on wheels to facilitate rapid transport. The wards are fitted up each in their own colours, bed coverings and curtains to match! What luxury!

I seriously thought of trying to attach Auxiliary Hospital No. 6 to this, but I find the practical difficulties are too great.

When I got back I found two different objects awaiting me. One was a silk scarf from Liberty's, a present from one of my grateful guests, and the other a strip of thick, coarse, sail cloth, thrown down by my son when flying in his aeroplane over our old roof. He was on the return journey after having dropped pamphlets and papers over Lille.

In a little pocket, sewn with black thread on to the white cloth, he had slipped a little letter—just a few lines to say he had got back safely from his perilous mission. It was written in advance with a sublime faith in his lucky star! My name was in big letters on the stuff, so that when the streamer fell from the aeroplane, turning round and round as it fell, and finally lodging in the branches of a lonely poplar in open country, the Tommy who went up and got it had no hesitation in saying: "It's for the Baroness."

And so Jack Churchill, coming into the library, found me dreaming before these two bits of stuff, "the respective souvenirs of filial love and friendship," as he put it, and, taking the coarse cloth between his hands, he said with some acuteness of perception: "More solid and more durable! I am sure you love it best!" A true and pretty thought!

Among my letters, too, I found one from Emily enclosing the splendid mention in despatches just accorded to Amaury. I really think that I may be forgiven my maternal pride!

"AMAURY DE LA GRANGE

"An excellent military pilot who has given many proofs of courage while performing his duty. Has taken part in several air flights and brought back his machine damaged by enemy fire. Has made numerous night

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flights for reconnoitring or bombardment, often under very difficult conditions—notably that of the 20th May, when, on a very dark night, he left to attack a Zeppelin, whose approach had been signalled, and accomplished his bombardment.

" (*Signed*) HÉLY D'OISSEL,
General.

Monday: 29th.

Today I went to Pierrebrouck to get my Belgian permit, and was received by M. de Brocqueville, Minister of War. This charming man reminded me that he had been at school with my husband, and asked affectionately after my brother-in-law Louis, for whom he had a real friendship. He asked me to lunch with him.

Passing through Cassel on my return from this expedition, I stopped to see the French Mission to the British Army, where I heard that the Countess Van den Steen, who was in charge of the hospital work under the Queen of the Belgians at Poperinghe, was at the Hôtel Sauvage, where she had come for a rest. There she had become seriously ill.

And so, indeed, I found her, in one of those little rooms characteristic of small provincial hotels, that military occupation had left in a by no means sanitary state.

She was in high fever and suffering badly with her head.

Just under her bedroom was a dining-room, in which a gramophone was competing with a British artillery officer who was pounding out popular songs now in vogue from an awful old, jangling, hotel piano.

" It's a long way to Tipperary,
It's a long way to go.
It's a long way to Tipperary,
To the sweetest girl I know.
Farewell, Piccadilly! Farewell, Leicester Square!
It's a long way to Tipperary,
But my heart's right there."

" Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag
And smile, smile, smile!
What's the use of worrying?
Smile, boys, smile!"

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And then:

"Take me back to dear old Blighty."

The bombardment at Poperinghe, which she had come here to escape for a time, were hardly more prejudicial to a tired invalid than the noise produced by the agile fingers of the British officer, and when at mess you add to this the song and yells and laughter of the young guests, full of life, waiting here the hour when they must face Death, it was enough to kill anyone gravely ill.

I used all my influence to persuade my friend to come to La Motte au Bois at once, and she agreed to do so as soon as she felt she had strength enough to make the journey in a car.

JUNE, 1916

Thursday: 1*st.*

General Galliéni is dead.

Paris has just honoured her former Governor by an imposing funeral, a touching and spontaneous homage to the memory of the great soldier France has lost, to the glorious conqueror of the Ourcq.

The ceremony took place at Les Invalides, and the body, placed on a gun-carriage, was taken to the Gare de Lyon to be entrained for St. Raphaël, his native district.

Friday: 2*nd.*

The Countess Van den Steen has arrived here very ill with some form of blood poisoning, having been infected by a dead body. I have just put her in a room on the first floor. The English doctors seem very anxious, as the fever is increasing all the time.

In the afternoon I was visited by the Duc d'Ursel and the Count de Grunne. I also had a visit from some hospital nurses of the amateur variety! I wish I had the talent to write, à l'Anatole France, a study that I would entitle: "Anthology of Hospital Nurses at the Front and Rear." For there are some choice morsels by the bedside of the sick, enveloping the

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wounded with clouds of iris-scented powder and the touch of their velvety arms! Some of these no doubt well-meaning creatures ought to be made "to go through the mill," put, in fact, into the secondary services of cleaning and mending. A good many would soon desert and the real "nurses" would remain, always at the disposal of the only two really serious French hospital foundations—viz., the Military Red Cross and the "Ladies of France."

I do not the less admire the goodwill of some of the benevolent people who do real service (though often having a few, or many, whims). The offer of materials, medicines, etc., cannot be refused by our medical authorities, who are not able to take on themselves the full weight of so many evacuations of the wounded. With the material, one often has to accept the services of the giver, and, as we all know, "one does not look a gift horse in the mouth"!

Sunday: 4th.

This morning, Madame Terlinden, a Belgian nurse from the Countess Van den Steen's hospital, arrived here. She was accompanied by an elderly, doll-like woman, plump, and wearing a poke bonnet of the 1880 period, with other garments equally odd. She was introduced to me as Madame Loïe Fuller, the former dancer, and one of the first artists to make use of special lights as an aid to her art. She used to dance twenty years ago, swathed in gauze veils under various coloured lights, which produced the effect of butterflies' wings. There still remains to her a grace of movement of body and hands, a sort of general rhythmic cadence. For the rest, she is very simple and generous-hearted, and by her former reputation has collected a good many dollars in America for the Belgian war charities that interest her. Madame Terlinden brought her here on this account, and, as the Countess is very ill, it was I who benefited by this strange visit.

The unlucky part of the affair was that the Prince of Wales, in paying a visit to the Staff, was kind enough to ask for me, and was shown the way to the

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hall. I saw his fair head for a moment through the glass door of the vestibule, but apparently the strange appearance of my singular visitor alarmed him, for he disappeared at once and I saw him no more!

Tuesday: 6th.

There is a terrible rumour that Lord Kitchener has lost his life at sea. Surely it cannot be true!

Today I paid a visit to Cassel, not to call on the great Chief guiding the destinies of the 2nd Army, but on the one who out of kindness to me is good enough to make arrangements for my humble civilian motor car which, thanks to the care of the British Army, is looked after just like the lorries and H.Q. cars. Dear General Chichester is good enough to consider my car as an instrument of national defence. It is in his workshops that it is repaired when springs are broken as the result of jumping over a shell-hole. And whenever I run out of petrol my tanks are magically filled as the result of a call at his headquarters.

Wednesday: 7th.

Yesterday the English doctors held another consultation on the state of the Countess Van den Steen. They seem to be hesitating as to the necessity for an operation. I have decided to telephone to the Queen of the Belgians, knowing the affectionate friendship she has for Countess Van den Steen. I fear to take such a responsibility on myself in the absence of all her family in the invaded district.

Later.

General Melis came in haste in the name of the Queen to obtain more details. He returned to La Panne before twelve o'clock this morning to give an account of his visit. And this afternoon I received a message from the Queen saying she has consulted Professor Lepage, chief surgeon at her clinic, and that he said he was of the opinion the operation should be performed at once by the French surgeon that I had suggested, Doctor Pugniez, who is at the moment in Calais.

Without losing a moment I sent to fetch him. And

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tonight he has accomplished the most delicate and difficult operation, which, thank God! seems to have been perfectly successful.

It is perfectly true: the *Hampshire*, carrying Lord Kitchener, has been lost at sea. It is a terrible misfortune for all of us. He was on his way to Russia. We French may be proud that he fought under our flag as a young man in 1870, when France was attacked by Germany.

This tragic end of Lord Kitchener is the greatest loss yet of the whole war for the English nation.

In every class and party the emotion is intense.

Even Germany renders a certain homage to Lord Kitchener. He is described as a "National God," as a legend in Great Britain, and the German papers add: "Lord Kitchener really was a national hero."

Thursday: 8th.

There was great excitement in the English Army when news came of the naval battle of Jutland, first published as a defeat, and then known as a victory.

My guests are commenting on these extraordinary facts, and grabbing newspapers one from the other.

On the 15th December, 1914, the German fleet for the first time measured its forces against the British. At the first bombardment of Scarborough by the German battle cruisers there was a fight between a T.B.D. and the *Hamburg*. This last, after having got away from the T.B.D., met a squadron of British cruisers. There was no fight, however, on account of a furious storm. There was also a meeting between eight Dreadnoughts, commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir George Warrender, who was deceived by the Germans sending out false signals—English ones picked up by wireless—and this trick enabled the Germans to get back to their squadron when they were in a very dangerous position.

On the 25th April of this year there was the second bombardment of the English coast. The *Derflinger* sent a storm of shells into the ports of Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth. Then on the 31st May last was the

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battle of the Skagerack, or Jutland. Admiral Beatty, commanding the English cruisers, engaged the battle, and was reinforced in the evening by the bulk of Admiral Jellicoe's squadron. The German squadron was ably commanded—according to English opinion—by Admiral Scheer, and managed to remain more or less invisible in the mist and after, in the reflection of the sunlight. Finally they retreated. After Jellicoe joined Beatty the proportion of the fleets was two to one. In the first phase of the battle the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary* of the British Fleet were sunk, two of the finest ships. After which Admiral Beatty tried to envelop the German Squadron. The second phase was this bold attempt, and its success allowed Jellicoe to continue the battle. The third phase was the attempt of the Germans to escape by going to the south, steering for their port when they were surrounded by the British cruisers of Admiral Hood and Admiral Beatty. The darkness enabled them to escape behind their own mine field, and the English Fleet was obliged to abandon the chase. On the 1st June the German Squadron sailed into port, diminished, though not admitting defeat. Having fled, however, it looks rather like it!

At first the British hardly dared to give themselves the victory, their losses were heavy. The sea was strewn with cruisers flaming like torches, and though some were German, many were British. And the victory was only allowed to be certain when it was seen that the German Fleet did not risk another sortie from their ports.

Saturday: 10*th.*

Amaury has asked me to go and take a photo of the grave of two German aviators who fell near Hazebrouck on the 22nd May.

He wants to drop them over the enemy lines, as a token of the courteous relations existing, at all events, in the Air Service, in spite of the general savagery of this war.

The unhappy families of the lost men are equally to be pitied on whichever side of the line they may be.

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In spite of the immense amount of work I have on my hands at this moment, I intend to acquit myself quickly of this little act of Christian charity.

Sunday: 11*th.*

As it happened, I was frightfully tired, having been up all night with my invalid, and, coming back from vespers at four o'clock this afternoon, I went and lay down on my bed. I was awakened, while dreaming of victory, by a violent knocking at my door, and while I was rubbing my eyes I heard the gardener's voice begging me to come down, as the Queen of the Belgians was awaiting me at the foot of the stairs! It was a question of collecting my sleepy wits and getting tidy as quickly as possible.

But when I reached the last step of the staircase I was completely fascinated. The Queen was there—so simple and so gracious in a white gown, in which she looked like a snowflake, with a pretty tam o'shanter, under which one saw her golden hair and deep periwinkle-blue eyes, which have a direct searching look that seems to reach one's soul.

Before those speaking eyes there was no need of excuses, so I simply said I had been asleep after *Mass.* I took the Queen into the library. She was accompanied by two gentlemen, a soldier and a civilian—Lieutenant-General du Roy de Blicquy, her Equerry, and Dr. Widmer de Valmont, a Swiss.

She then asked after the Countess Van den Steen. I explained the cause of my anxiety, and she said she would like to see the invalid. I went up to inquire what I should do.

Some minutes later I came down again to get the Queen, and as we went up she stopped suddenly and asked me: "Madame de La Grange, what time is it?"

I looked at my watch, and said: "Half-past four, madame, I believe."

"Ah," said the Queen, "I am glad to hear it. Just now you said you had just returned from Mass, and I wondered if it were still morning, as there is no Mass after noon!"

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By this time I really was awake, and, rather stung, replied to this Royal teasing by remarking that really some confusion of hours, Mass and vespers, was allowable when one was awakened with a start by a hammering at one's door and the announcement made to a simple mortal that the Queen of the Belgians was on the stairs!

A charming laugh, frank and rippling, replied to my honest defence, and the delightful apparition went lightly up to the door of the sick-room, which she entered with the quiet precaution of the experienced nurse that she is. Discretion sent me to wait in the next room during this touching meeting between the Queen and the lady who, with no thought of herself, is ruining her health by her devotion to the Belgian wounded.

Tuesday: 18*th*.

Today, about noon, the Queen telephoned, through the Staff, that she was coming down for news of the Countess Van den Steen in the afternoon. And at four o'clock the Royal car entered the courtyard. *This* time I was at the door, as etiquette demanded, and the Queen went quickly up to see the patient. As the surgeon was expected, she was to wait to see him. The Queen came alone with her Equerry. It was pouring in torrents, and the Queen was dressed in a dark tailor-made, which showed her pretty figure. She glanced out of the window at the park—simply *oozing* water—and said to me gaily: "Your lovely trees! I have missed trees for so long. Madame de La Grange, supposing we go for a walk! Will you?"

Never did the little Queen suspect that I had put on my prettiest shoes to receive her, but I bore up bravely against misfortune, replying that I should be charmed to do the honours of the estate! And so there and then we set out, I holding an umbrella worthy of Louis Philippe and walking first down to the lake.

The Equerry followed, casting rueful looks on his gold braid, and, whichever way I held it, the Queen never seemed to be under the umbrella! The space

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between us was kept dry, but the rain fell on us both!

When we came in, tea was served in the library, where a good fire dried us a little, and the Queen, interested in a fine portrait of my grandmother, Marchioness de Chaumont-Quitry, painted in the dress of the First Empire, asked to hear her history.

So I told her the romantic story of Stéphanie Tascher de la Pagerie, niece of the Empress Joséphine, who lived in Martinique till the age of fourteen, when the Emperor sent for her to come to France.

At that time the war with England was at its height, and the ship bringing the young girl was captured at sea. When the Emperor heard he asked for her to be released. The English refused unless France would set at liberty as many young English girls as Stéphanie could count in years! The exchange was made at sea, and fourteen furious little Englishwomen—who had been having the time of their lives in Paris!—terrified the little French girl by their threatening gestures—of their words she did not understand one!

Shortly after her arrival in France, Stéphanie was married by the Emperor's orders to the Duc d'Arenberg. But, by mutual agreement, the couple decided that, as she did not care for him, it should be a marriage in name only. Joséphine Destors, governess to the little bride, slept in her room, and a small negro page from Martinique, called Lindor, guarded the door like a faithful dog. With the fall of the Empire, an annulment was procured from Rome. Then Stéphanie married the Marquis de Chaumont-Quitry, while the Duc d'Arenberg married the Princess Lobkowitz. Each couple had a family of seven children.

The Queen seemed greatly interested in the story, and I ventured to add that my grandmother had a niece of the same name (Stéphanie Tascher de la Pagerie). She never married, and died at the age of seventy-eight. She told me of her visits to the Court of Bavaria, and said that she often played at hide-and-seek in the park of a certain Royal château with a delightful little princess named Elisabeth. I saw the Equerry start

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when I said the word "Bavaria," but I knew what I was doing and that I could say, *tête-à-tête* with the Queen, what I should never have dreamed of saying under other circumstances.

The deep blue eyes, after an instant's look of hesitation and surprise, met mine full of confidence, and she said it gave her pleasure to hear me speak of that. She well remembered the madcap games with Aunt Stéphanie (as everyone called her). "I was so little," said the Queen, "and she ran so fast that I could never follow her."

I had touched the delicate point, I knew, but I had done it tactfully, and without getting the hard reply received by one of our *hommes de lettres*, who, on a visit to La Panne attacked the subject of Bavaria.

"Between me and Bavaria," the Queen had said, "there has fallen an iron curtain."

During a moment of silence, when the only sound to be heard was the boom of the cannon on the front of Armentières, my glance met the Queen's, and she said: "Madame de La Grange, what are you thinking of?"

"I was thinking," I said, "that the French would be fortunate to have a gracious Queen such as you, madame."

"I am touched that you should say so," she replied. "I love France so well."

The arrival of the doctor at six o'clock put an end to this unforgettable interview.

The Queen was waiting to see General Birdwood on his return (I wished to present him), when the Equerry, seeing the time, ventured to say that the King would be anxious.

"Yes," replied the Queen gaily, "Albert will scold me." But the prospect did not seem to alarm her, and she stayed very late.

Then, getting into the car, she waved to me in a pretty little gesture of farewell.

Wednesday: 14*th.*

The Belgian Lancers invited me to their mess. It was a quite unexpected expedition.

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Commandant de Kerchove presided over the "pot-luck," Abbé de Ribeaucourt was the chaplain, and the other officers were Captains de Blommart, Walus Rodolph van der Burch, and my nephew, Obert de Thieusies, interpreter to the British Army. One place was empty, that of Madame Terlinden, the nice nurse of Poperinghe. Suddenly she arrived, limping badly. We thought she was wounded, but she avowed meekly that she had left the heel of her shoe in the tram-line! A disability that has never yet been regarded as a result of war! This pleasantry added to the cheerfulness of our party, which lasted till three o'clock.

Coming out we met Father Wynch, a veritable apostle at the front. His long, thin figure, always in the foremost trenches, will remain a legend.

At La Panne I met Commandant Tulasne, under whose orders my son is serving. He spoke to me of Amaury in such terms as greatly pleased my maternal pride, and told me that soon he would be a squadron-leader.

Today General Allenby came to lunch with me, bringing Lord Dalmeny, one of my old Cavalry Corps guests and a great polo player. He used to exercise his ponies on my lawn, which was often extremely heavy.

Thursday: 15*th.*

Yesterday I visited the hospital ship of Madame O'Gorman, which is in the canal near Bergues, and saw the civilian wounded she has there.

Moored to the bank, this barge, arranged as an infirmary, struck me by its perfect order. The matron, like a ship's commander, used a megaphone to give her orders on this boat, where, though there is no fear of tempest, they might yet have to weigh anchor at any moment to avoid an attack by the 380's.

Dunkirk is suffering from a competition in bombardment from air, land, and sea.

Our poor Hazebrouck has been often bombarded, too, but there is one story which has an amusing side to it.

Attached to the French Mission there has been a certain Territorial officer from the South of France. He

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fulfilled his particular duties with most praiseworthy zeal and success; but, poor man, separated from his blue southern skies and all his family, he was very bored and lonely. Finally, very discreetly he smuggled his daughter into the district. She was a young lady of an age to take care of herself, in general, but one day there was a terrible aeroplane attack on the town when she was in her bath! A bomb fell at the very door of her house. The father rushed to the rescue, to meet his daughter in bath-gown and with flowing hair and a strong determination to get away directly at any price!

The distracted parent thought of me at once, and, flinging a few extra garments on his daughter, he rushed out here by car.

The fugitive fair one was deposited like a parcel at my door, and her father returned to his post.

As bad luck—or good luck—had it, I was away for a night, and so it fell to the lot of General Birdwood's Staff to entertain the fugitive. My gardener got ready a room for her, whilst the officers undertook to feed her at their mess. The poor girl thus found herself in the middle of a camp and without knowing a word of English—a most embarrassing situation! The officers, however, were less embarrassed, and an inimitable conversation followed.

"My name," explained General Birdwood, "is 'Oiseau des bois.'"

"I," said General White, "am called General 'Blanc.'"

"And my name," said Captain Churchill, "is 'Église sur colline.'"

The name of the Canadian, Joly de Lotbinière, went straight to her heart as being a bit of real France. The young officers were teasing her in a friendly manner, and the question arose how to explain to her the meaning of the phrase "pull her leg." The most accomplished Staff officer, who was supposed to speak French very well, volunteered the excellent translation, "tirer la jambe." An idea which was not at all badly received by Mlle. de X.

I gather, from what I have been told, that the even-

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ing was very gay—but I don't expect I was told all! And before I came back she had returned to her father's home, her departure much regretted by the charming young officers!

Tuesday: 20th.

I have been able to see Amaury several times this month. One day the Countess Van den Steen lent me her car (her permit allows of more easy travelling in the Belgian zone than mine), and I went to St. Idesbald, where he has been since October, 1915, in the dunes round La Panne. Emily has passed her nursing exam, and is at the Military Hospital at Malo-les-Bains, near Dunkirk, where the Countess Benoist d'Azy is the matron.

The 1st Anzac Corps (General Birdwood) will be replaced at La Motte au Bois by the 2nd Anzacs (General Godley).

I am more resigned to the departure of my charming guests and General Birdwood, because they have only gone to Bailleul, and I hope often to see them again. General Birdwood has become a real friend and his stay one that will be remembered in the annals of La Motte au Bois.

Sunday: 25th.

Today the Countess Van den Steen left me. After the days of terrible anxiety were passed her presence here made my life very pleasant. Owing to the immense services she has rendered the British, they have nicknamed her "Major Poperinghe." She is going back to this centre of German activity.

Monday: 26th.

The day before yesterday I received a telegram from M. Naquet Radiguet, the famous Paris barrister. He was bringing his daughter-in-law to Hazebrouck. They wished to see the grave of their son and husband, Jean Naquet Radiguet, who was killed at the attack on Vimy Ridge and buried by his comrades in one of the numerous little cemeteries at Villers-aux-Bois. I was waiting for them in Hazebrouck Station when a tele-

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phone message, through the French Mission attached to the British Army, informed me of their plight. In spite of numerous safe conducts, they found they could get no farther than Calais! I decided to go to Calais by car, a distance of 85 kilometres.

That day was one of the hardest and most tiring I have ever gone through in my life. At the station buffet I found M. Naquet Radiguet, his daughter-in-law, and her father. They told me that the military policeman, on seeing all their papers, said they had too many! They *must* be false, only spies had so many! In fact, he refused to let them pass.

By this time I was very hungry, having had nothing to eat since early morning, but, not to lose time, I just bought a sandwich. Then, going out by a hidden door, I made the three get quickly into my car, which was in the station square. Hiding them as well as I could, I got past the sentry-box which I had passed on entering the town, and gave my most gracious smile to the confiding military policeman on duty. He gave an answering smile, and thus the travellers, forbidden to enter the zone by train, approached it by road.

It gives me a delicious sense of enjoyment to bluff a policeman! Sad to say, I really do get an agreeable thrill when I think of it.

The Château de Ranchicourt, the end of our first stage, is north of Arras. It is now the headquarters of a charming man, General Sir Henry Wilson,[1] Chief of the Sector of Villers-aux-Bois.

General Wilson, having awaited us in vain for lunch, left word that he would be back for tea. He ordered his A.D.C., Lord Duncannon, to attend us in our sad pilgrimage. It would, indeed, have been extremely dangerous, without knowing the country and so near the battle-front, to have adventured alone.

Captain Lord Duncannon sat by the chauffeur to direct him. In the brilliant sunshine the well-cleaned headlights of the car gleamed like mirrors, and when the A.D.C. told us that he had eight kilometres to do under

[1] Later, he was attached to the person of Marshal Foch, who had the highest esteem for him; we all deplore his tragic end.

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the eye of the Boches, a little shiver like a trickle of cold water ran down our spines!

At one particular moment he warned the chauffeur not on any account to stop, as we might become a target.

As we approached Villers-aux-Bois, he made the man put on speed in spite of all the shell-holes and ruts everywhere in the road, which was quite unfit for wheeled traffic, and once we had crossed the first ruins of the village, he had the car hidden under the lee of a wall.

My chauffeur was more than glad, having lost two fingers at Verdun. I got down, followed by my companions, and we advanced among the ruins in Indian file, searching for the little cemetery, our destination.

After passing the church I saw a square full of crosses, some surmounted by little wreaths of bead flowers, others with the képi, or the cap, of the French poilus, and others again displaying the caps of the British uniforms.

How many of these graves are unknown to those who mourn a husband or a son, sleeping there for ever?

From afar we saw the line of trenches, a long, capricious ribbon clinging to the side of a hill, very white on the reddish-brown earth from the effect of the chalk or clay thrown up from below by spade and pick.

We scrutinized the horizon anxiously—it was always menacing, but for the moment there was silence.

This subterranean life of the two opposite armies, watching like cat and mouse, ready to take advantage of each other's slightest movement to kill, must be simply atrocious!

Why didn't they fire on us? We simply were not worth it! Shells are too expensive to be wasted.

A little later, when a convoy would pass, there would be a frightful bombardment, mowing down the very soil, burying alive the living and throwing up the bodies of the dead.

In the cemetery we shared the task of seeking the grave. Suddenly I heard a sob near me. It was the poor wife and widow. Her heart had guided her straight to what she sought, that little heap of earth that she watered with her tears.

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At a little distance the A.D.C., respectful of her grief, gave a military salute. Our ally showed his sympathy with that delicacy which I have so often noticed in the British, whose feelings are often so little understood by us.

The family group, after standing a moment round the grave, placed a large wreath upon it. I had seen this in a big cardboard box hoisted on to the car. This seemingly unimportant object at such a moment yet played its little part. It had been left on the rough road of the cemetery when the wreath had been taken out. Almost immediately the A.D.C. and I had noticed a Tommy who, from the entrance to a ruined cellar, appeared to be regarding it coveteously! It looked ridiculous enough, that cardboard box in the middle of the devastation! One saw in one's mind's eye the corner of the Boulevard Haussmann and the Rue de l'Arcade where the wreath had been carefully put in the box—and then this horizon of battle! But it seemed to tempt the fighter gazing from his refuge. And, when going back to the car, I followed my poor friends across the ruins, I could not help glancing back, and was just in time to see the Tommy seize it triumphantly and carry it off.

The setting sun threw a fiery glare over the ruined church; in the distance a slight mist floated over the Boche trenches, and suddenly there rose up before us from the midst of a fallen mass of masonry, once a house, a strange old woman, who wandered on before us in the deserted street. She was grotesquely clad in rags that might have clothed some weird carnival figure. The A.D.C. questioned a Tommy. The soldier touched his forehead with a pitying gesture. "A lunatic," he said; "although sent away several times, she has returned."

Mad, no doubt, from seeing her home destroyed, her family wiped out, the village a devastation, the very abomination of desolation.

Ah, poor soul, how much kinder is Death than Life to such as you! The car took us back late in the evening to Ranchicourt.

General Wilson had not returned, and as we could,

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by making haste, just get the train from Hazebrouck to Paris, I thanked the A.D.C. and left at once with my companions.

It was eleven o'clock when I got back home, having covered an extraordinary amount of ground in a very short time!

The Countess Van den Steen's cousin, the Marquis de Frasigny, has been to see me. He is a member of one of the oldest families in Belgium, descended from the Nassau. He is one of the four Belgian marquesses.

Another cousin of the Countess Van den Steen is the Count Fitz Van den Steen de Jehay, who has also been to see us.

Friday: 30th.

I have just had this very nice letter from the Count de Jehay:

29th June, 1916.

MADAME,

I do not remember which of the philosophers it was who said that human egotism is such that it considers all events in life from the subjective standpoint, and that it is rare to find a man sufficiently disinterested not to rejoice at anything that may be useful or agreeable to him! And this, even should the event be injurious to others!

To my shame I confess that after having been very anxious about the danger run by a cousin that I am allowed to call my little sister, I find I cannot regret the cause which took me to La Motte au Bois, and gave me the chance of meeting the charming châtelaine of the house.

Confession made, I hope to have absolution. . . . Besides, there are many extenuating circumstances!

How charming is that verdant setting in which Mars is forging his arms to bring about the triumph of Right!

Grace and Valour preside! The Arts even are not excluded. And how, indeed, should one not remember with pleasure those hours of conversation when were recounted so many interesting things with the charm bestowed by wit and heart.

It only remains to me, Madame, to express my gratitude for that hospitality of which I keep so precious a

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recollection and for all the kindness with which you are surrounding her whom your cares have saved for those who love her.

With my deepest, sincerest thanks,

I am, etc.

JULY, 1916

Sunday: 2nd.

Today we drank a bottle of champagne to the recent success of the Franco-British arms on the Somme.

General Birdwood and General White announced to me the capture of 7,000 prisoners by the British alone!

Thursday: 6th.

Since the middle of June, we have been living through great times. Events succeed each other, spreading and growing ever greater, keeping our minds on the alert and in a state of feverish excitement.

We are now awaiting news with growing impatience, as there is a rumour that, in the north, the Franco-British Army is advancing. The march began on Saturday, and a battle on the Somme is expected.

If only it could be decisive!

This morning I received this charming letter from Sir Henry Wilson, in reply to a note I sent him thanking him for his assistance on the occasion of our visit to Villers-au-Bois:

DEAR MADAME LA BARONNE,

I can assure you I am much more disappointed at not having seen you than ever you can have been by missing me. I have heard so much, and so often, about you from three old friends, Generals Allenby, Byng, and Pulteney, and also from many of my younger friends who have been, from time to time, quartered under your hospitable roof. So, you see, I know much more about you than ever you could have learnt from that naughty Requin who drew endless pictures of me, making me taller and thinner and uglier every time!

I hope very much, Madame la Baronne, that a little

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later, either I may find the time to pay you my respects or that I may be again honoured by a visit.

I am going down tomorrow to see my old friend General Foch, who is doing so splendidly these days south of the Somme. Thank you so much for writing and saying such nice things about my aide-de-camp, Lord Duncannon. It was a great pleasure to be of even the slightest service to you and your friends. Believe me, dear Madame,

Very sincerely yours,
HENRY WILSON.

This letter I shall always treasure as coming from one of the greatest soldiers of the British Army, who is particularly appreciated by the chiefs of the French Army, for they all speak to me of him in very high terms.

Saturday: 8th.

British communiqués speak of the offensive on the Somme.

"We are far from our objective yet," says the *Westminster Gazette*, "but the beginning is satisfactory."

The longer I live amongst the British troops, the greater is my faith in the efforts they are making to break the enemy line.

The Anzacs are to be sent to reinforce the front on the Somme, and when these fine fighters are attacking, the enemy need all their strength not to give ground.

Monday: 10th.

On the 8th an expedition with the Countess Van den Steen to have tea with General Chichester. We caught a glimpse of General Plumer and General Harington, who, as a matter of principle, never accept outside invitations, although they are always very kind and courteous.

The French Mission attached to this 2nd Army is composed of Captain Claude, Lieutenant de Lillers, and Serge Fleury. There was some sort of dispute between a French and Belgian officer, and General Allenby was

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chosen as arbitrator. Everyone is willing to accept the ruling of the Chief of the 3rd Army!

General Birdwood, who, since he left me, had his headquarters at Bailleul, left for the Somme, and great are our regrets at his departure.

The 1st Anzacs are going to reinforce the 4th Army (General Rawlinson); General Sir Alexander Godley has succeeded General Birdwood here. He is as unlike his predecessor as possible. Birdwood is small, Godley very tall; one has made his military career in India, the other in South Africa. It was there that he stood a siege of seven months, shut up in Mafeking (under Colonel Baden-Powell), with 700 English against 7,000 Boers. During this time it was impossible to get in supplies, and the siege had not been raised when the last mule was eaten!

It is a curious thing that Captain Godley, as he then was, was relieved at last by reinforcements commanded by Colonel H. Plumer, who is now his Chief in Flanders.

General Godley has kept his extreme thinness, engendered, perhaps, by this African Lent! Anyway, though it has not killed his appetite, he has never managed to grow very fat! Very *distingué*, very subtle, his wink preceding any mischievous little score is known to all his friends. He is a marvellous horseman, his brigade horses are always in perfect condition. He is a great admirer of Napoleon Bonaparte, especially of his tactics. He has even collected a little museum of Napoleon relics.

Wednesday: 12*th.*

Yesterday I got a letter from Sir Maurice de Bunsen, who, in 1915, had asked me to make inquiries about the whereabouts of the grave of Prince Max of Hesse. In this second letter he again asks me to try to get information which might clear up the mystery.

The Countess Van den Steen was here when I got the letter, and said she thought she knew someone who might help. Therefore, I went to Caestre furnished with this introduction. A lady took me to the local cemetery on the pretext of showing me family graves.

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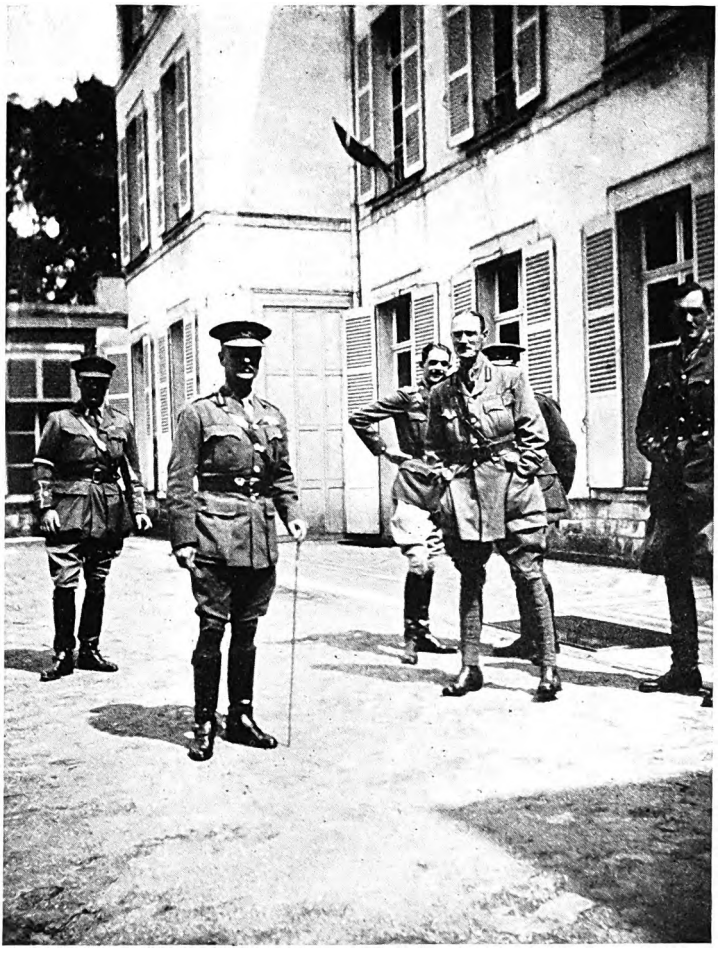

MAJOR JACK CHURCHILL, LT.-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD, CAPTAIN CHARLES GORDON, LT.-GENERAL SIR ALEXANDER GODLEY, CAPTAIN JACKSON, JULY, 1916

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She indicated unostentatiously the supposed place of interment of the Prince. Suddenly the grave-digger appeared, and most abusively bade us be gone! He yelled that we were "spies in German pay; *he* knew why we were there: it was to find the grave of Prince Max. We were bought by the Germans!" Before this abusive and ferocious brute there was nothing to be done, but we went round the cemetery under his nose all the same!

But evidently someone had chattered and given away the fact and object of our visit.[1]

Friday: 14*th.*

A German submarine has been bombarding the East Coast of England. Only one woman was killed, though material damage is considerable.

The National Fête in Paris today will be celebrated with the gravity due to the times. No one can forget what is happening just now on the Somme.

I am hoping that the splendid cathedral at Amiens will not suffer the fate of Rheims.

There is at Amiens, behind the altar, a lovely statue of a weeping child.

I should like to know if that work of art is still safe. Perhaps those baby tears shed during three long centuries may draw divine protection to one of the loveliest works of French architecture!

Saturday: 15*th.*

I invited to dinner General Godley, Chief of the 2nd Anzacs, with his A.D.C., Lieutenant Gordon, Colonel Barclay, Captain Kennerley Rumford, Major Fernie, and Lieutenant de Lastours of the French Mission. I told them of my queer adventure at Caestre, and they were much amused and teased me about my spying. We begged Captain Kennerley Rumford, one of the greatest of English singers, to give us some music. His superb voice charmed us all.

Hardly had my guests gone when the gardener's

[1] The next day I was officially called to Hazebrouck to give an explanation of my visit to the sous-préfet of the town.

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wife came to tell me that "a Scotch officer wanted to see me."

Expecting to see the traditional kilt, I wondered if I were dreaming when I met Faizullah, General Birdwood's Indian standard-bearer! He was carrying a little parcel, something most carefully done up in tissue paper. He held it out to me, saying in his own peculiar English: "Baroness, me I have for you a little souvenir. It is Indian from my country. I bought it in Bailleul!" (This town, 12 kilometres from here, is indeed a "branch" of India these days, full of Sikhs and Gurkhas). Once undone, the parcel revealed a little green handkerchief, stamped with palms, and made in the Rue du Sentier!

I was really touched by this gift, and bade him hearty farewells. He was then leaving with the General's horse for Vignacourt, the headquarters of the 1st Anzacs, at present.

But I should like to know the association of ideas and the connection between a Sikh and a Scot!

When I asked the gardener's wife, she replied: "They're all furriners; it's the same thing!"

Sunday: 16*th.*

Tonight we hear that the British were successful yesterday in taking a wood near Longueval, which the Tommies call Devil's Wood. Another success to be thankful for and proud of!

Monday: 17*th.*

Yesterday the Countess Van den Steen came for me in her car to take me to Paris. We stopped at Béthune to hear Mass, little thinking how extraordinarily impressive the ceremony would prove to be. We found the church full of British soldiers in full fighting rig, ready to go up to the trenches, their rifles piled before each rank. A Catholic priest was reading the Act of Contrition; the men repeated it aloud, striking their breasts. One would have said that they were all expecting death. The priest made a big gesture of General Absolution, and nearly all the men went to Communion.

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Many Protestants, it seems, had joined the Church the night before, and were making their First Communion. This wonderful manifestation of faith impressed us profoundly.

At 12.30, we got to St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, where General Allenby, commanding the 3rd Army, awaited us for lunch. We brought him an unexpected guest, the Prince of Croÿ of the Belgian Army, attached to the N.Z. Division. We had tea at Vignacourt with General Birdwood. Directly he heard I was there, Faizullah the Indian appeared to salute. I had ostentatiously placed the famous handkerchief in the pocket of my jacket, where its green silk and palms were very conspicuous.

We entered Paris by St. Denis about nine o'clock at night. At St. Denis we saw Allied troops under very different conditions and aspects, very different from those of the church at Béthune! Troops—Scotch, Canadian, Australian, and Indian—having come in for the review of the 14th July, were marching through the streets to entrain at the Gare du Nord. A dense crowd barred their progress. Women and girls flung their arms round them, kissing them. One heard laughs and half-stifled cries, which the men were mimicking very drolly. The Scotsmen, though hard pressed, did their best to maintain coolness and discipline; but the kilt has a terrible success always—perhaps I had better stop here!

Round the Australians reigned delirium. The women had taken their big hats and thrown their own upon the soldiers' heads. Mothers, with a very touching gesture, held out their babies to them.

The officers maintained order with difficulty, and for two hours we were blocked. It was eleven o'clock before we got free of this flood of humanity. We succeeded at last, thinking, as they disappeared, that perhaps only tomorrow these men, like their comrades at Béthune, would be so near death that nothing but the last great pardon of God would count for them!

After this we had much further delay, being frequently stopped to have our travelling permits examined, and

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only got to Paris at 1 o'clock in the morning. We had to find an hotel (my flat being sub-let), and after drawing blanks at the Ritz, Meurice, and Wagram, we had better luck at the Crillon. They allowed us to leave the car under the entrance arch, and we paid 100 francs each for rooms from two o'clock till eight that morning. Sleep costs money at this rate, and we decided not to lose a minute. It was a question of who could abandon herself first to the arms of the gentle god Morpheus!

I then spent two days under the roof of our old family town house in the Boulevard des Invalides.

On the 19th I lunched at my sister de Lubersac's with my brother Felix, the two Princes de Croÿ, and the Countess Van den Steen. The last mentioned left with me, after luncheon, and we returned to the front by the same route as we had come. We arrived late for tea at General Birdwood's, and late for dinner at General Allenby's headquarters.

Going through Béthune in pitch darkness was eerie and impressive. All lights out, we crawled on in the black night, lighted only by the flares from the trenches.

Thursday: 20th.

The King of England has sent to General Sir Douglas Haig the following telegram:

"The continued advance of my troops fills me with admiration. I send to all ranks my best wishes."

These good wishes from their King go from rank to rank and reach the men, even the most remote, in the mud of the trenches, warming their hearts and cheering them.

One has only to hear the respect with which all the English speak of the King to realize how his thoughts of and for them are appreciated. Even the Australians and New Zealanders, who are extremely democratic, love the Royal Family.

They have the sense to mark the difference between the revolutionary and the democrat, and consider that Democracy itself may be Conservative. With us the mentality is different.

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It is the same thing with Freemasonry.

In Anglo-Saxon countries it is regarded as a society for mutual help, but in France it is sectarian, anti-religious, and revolutionary.

Saturday: 22nd.

There is alarming news today of the fate of several thousand men near Armentières and also that a British powder magazine has blown up at Audruick, near Calais, costing many lives.

Wednesday: 26th.

On the 23rd there was a big attack on Pozières, which explains the precipitate departure from Bailleul of the 1st Anzacs, who left La Motte au Bois in June.

On the 24th I attended the funeral of Marie de Moras (Albert's sister) at Hazebrouck. She died of fatigue through over-devotion to her work as a Red Cross nurse.

I had heard that my son was getting leave, so I decided to fetch Emily from Malo-les-Bains, and was not sorry to get her away from the neighbourhood of submarines and enemy aircraft.

I wished to take her to Abbeville to get the train for Paris; there was a breakdown; she lost her train and had no resource but to sleep in the station. I went, late again, to Allenby's headquarters for dinner. His charming young son was there, having just been mentioned in despatches for having penetrated into an enemy trench from which he had returned with the walking-stick of a certain Baron von something and important information.

He is a shy young fellow with ladies, but obviously not backward as a soldier! He came from England at the age of eighteen to join an artillery battery of the 2nd Army, commanded by General Plumer. Coming back to La Motte, I planned to get father and son here together. So two messages went out at the same time, one addressed to the Chief of the 3rd Army fixing a day, and the other to the Chief of the 2nd Army asking him to give a pass and means of transport to Lieutenant of Artillery Michael Allenby.

On arrival, General Allenby approached me with an

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air of severity, and assured me I had done a most incorrect thing in asking "an Army Chief to send a Lieutenant out visiting"! He said it wasn't done—his son's career would be ruined!

By now, however, I knew the General's serio-comic reproaches, and I was preparing to show due remorse when Emilie, my daughter (who is staying here for a few days) came into the library where we were sitting.

"Oh, General Allenby," she said, "what luck to see you here! I want to ask a favour. I have an English nurse for my two little boys. Her brother is a Tommy in your Army. Will you give him a permit to come and see his sister?"

"Emilie has gone one better than her mother!" I said to Allenby. "I asked a favour for a lieutenant from one Chief; she asks it for a Tommy from another!"

"With you," said Allenby, smiling, "one never has the last word!"

I have had visits from Captain de Maleissye-Melun, the Princes de Croÿ, and Captain d'Ursel.

The 4th Army of General Rawlinson is supported by the French Army, and in liaison to the north with the 3rd Army, that of General Allenby, whose headquarters were first at St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, and then at the Château de Bryas, the house of my cousin, the Countess de Bryas.

The N.Z. Division covered itself with glory, as did the Australians, at Pozières.

General Birdwood wrote to me after one of these heavy battles. His letter was entirely in English until he reached an account of German vandalism in cutting down all the fruit-trees; then he used the very energetic expression in French: "These Boches are really *cochons!*"

After these terrific attacks it seems the German newspapers are writing thus: "One might believe that the only idea of the French and English is to kill as many Germans as possible. It is a complete butchery!"

Queer people, with rather one-sided ideas!

Another extract, this time from a letter found on a German soldier:

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"We are utterly worn out! So much so that we sleep under the most devastating fire from the left. All leaves us indifferent. The best thing for us would be for the English to force the lines and take us prisoners. No one bothers about us. We are not relieved. Aeroplanes harass us from above. One can no longer think. Rations are exhausted—bread, preserves, biscuits all gone! There is not a drop of water. It is Hell!"

Yesterday I was told that a German prisoner was in the fireman's hut. I was anxious to see him. He was under guard, and I could not obtain permission either to speak to him or to take his photograph; however, I got permission to photograph his guard. A Tommy pushed the door gently and stood at attention with his comrades. The German, knowing nothing whatever about the orders, opened the door behind his guards, and thus appeared in the picture.

Thursday: 27th.

Amaury is impatiently waiting for clear weather, which does not come. He says that for fourteen hours they have been wandering about the ground, watching the horizon and hoping to get up. He finds it more tiring than making a raid, as inaction gets on his nerves.

He asked me to send my car to Emily on the 17th to take her to Calais, where she could get a train to Paris at 7 p.m., arriving in Paris at 5 a.m., which is what is nowadays called an express!

Friday: 28th.

The French aviator Marshall has flown over Berlin and dropped proclamations to the population. The American papers admire the good sense and humanity of this method of bombardment. The Allies are not assassins.

They have shown this by their feelings of disgust at carrying the warfare of the front behind the lines, victimizing an innocent civil population.

The murders of women and children should not be considered as legitimate acts of war.

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The *Cologne Gazette* announces the resumption of aerial warfare against England.

This had ceased for a time, but is now to be started again on an increased scale. Is it a threat or a bluff? One wonders; but, in any case, our allies seem to be taking this melancholy possibility with the utmost calm. It must be rather disconcerting for the Germans, who are relying so much on the result of discouragement behind the lines.

AUGUST, 1916

Tuesday: 15*th—Feast of the Assumption.*

It has been wet, but the procession was able to pass between two showers. The curé, followed by his flock, the children dressed as usual as the Infant Jesus, St. John, and the angels, walked between the ranks of curious and interested Anzacs.

I have been away and must amplify my notes kept "en voyage." On the 28th July I heard from Amaury that he had got the eight days' leave. Luckily, just then I had to go to Paris to get an operating-table for the hospital. I started by car. Near Amiens I was stopped, and, finally, with a gendarme alongside the chauffeur, we were sent back nearly five miles, passing by the headquarters of General Foch. I was told I ought to have taken another road. The détour added some fourteen miles to the journey, used up petrol and tyres, and, if I *had* been a spy, gave me the chance of seeing the whereabouts of one of our most important headquarters! On the 31st I saw Amaury, but only for an hour. He then left for Fontainebleau with Emily.

On the 4th I awaited the young couple, who were to meet me, but there was a mishap. It is exasperating to lose precious hours sitting on a railway embankment!

On the 8th August I lunched at Boulogne-sur-Mer with Colonel Daru, governor of the town, to meet M. de Serionne, Director of the Suez Canal, his wife, and the Baroness Prosper de La Grange. Passport formalities

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being always long and tiresome, I hoped to get a "pass" from the Colonel, but I was dissuaded as, a few days before, he himself had been arrested at the gates of the town, so severe were his own orders on the subject of passes!

The three guests and the Colonel came here, and on the 9th I took them to visit Dunkirk. Already the ruins have become objects of sad curiosity to sightseers, the church destroyed, and most of the houses damaged.

In the evening we were invited to a dinner given by the officers of the 2nd Anzacs, several of whom had come via Egypt, and had experienced the charming hospitality of Ismailia (Suez Canal).

My cousin, Baroness Prosper de La Grange, having gone, the Serionnes expressed a desire to see a town which had been bombarded by big shells, the 380's, so that they might be able to speak of it from personal experience. In Egypt public opinion has no real idea of what the war on the French front is like.

I took them back by car to St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, and on the way we passed through Béthune, one of our martyred towns.

Just a few minutes before our arrival a shell had fallen plump on one of those pretty little houses built under and on to the walls of the belfry tower that one so often sees in medieval towns; it was now the home of a chemist. The poor man, who had been looking after wounded in his cellar, found himself walled in underground in company with the soldiers and civilians he was treating. The outside wall of the house had been cut off, so to speak, and a room on the first floor looked almost as if it were suspended in mid-air. The chemist's servant, who was ill in bed, was sitting up with haggard eyes, too stupefied to understand what had happened. The foot of her bed was held up miraculously by a beam which had not yet collapsed. As we found we could do nothing for these poor people, who were already being rescued by the town firemen, we made a hasty tour of the chief ruins, and not desiring to risk for too long the precious life of the Director of the Suez Canal; so, avoiding the rue du Pot, full of piled-up débris, the

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car took the road to Bryas at a pretty high speed. I wanted to show the château to M. and Mme. Serionne.

But on approaching it a man, with the armlet of the British Military Police, overwhelmed us with his steely gaze and told us that H.M. the King of England was expected, and no one else could enter.

Just as we got off the car at St. Pol-sur-Ternoise the King passed in a car with the Prince of Wales. I happened to be standing in the front of the small assembled crowd, and the King recognized and saluted me in passing.

Before catching their train, M. and Mme. Serionne had tea with me at General Allenby's headquarters.

On the 12th I took my daughter-in-law back to her little villa at Malo-les-Bains. My son had already left.

General Godley has received, like all commanding officers in Flanders, an interesting photograph taken from the air. On this document is the pilot's name, de La Grange, and so, on my return, the General hastened to show it to me, thinking it had been taken by my son. There is, in fact, only one pilot of that name in the district of the sand dune, and he is my son. I am glad to see it is such a good photograph.

Dear General Godley is delighted to state his appreciation of the intrepidity and coolness necessary to obtain this clear photograph; particularly since the enemy had concentrated a strong defence against air attack. The Tirpitz battery is near Ostend; it is on a cement platform, protected on the side towards the sea by barbed wire. It has four large pieces which bombard Dunkirk. Surely it was with the Villa Palmyre in his thoughts that Amaury has taken the trouble to locate this battery, which constitutes a constant possible threat to the little home at Malo.

Wednesday: 16*th.*

A little while ago I was sitting here at my writing-table in the library, watching with great interest the evolutions of six aeroplanes. The sky today is heavy with black clouds, and I saw the planes appear and disappear behind them.

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Suddenly I felt myself growing rigid with horror as I saw one of them begin to twist and twirl and flutter in the air with just the helpless, aimless movement of a dead leaf in the wind!

The wings were upside down—anyway, everyway, as it fell.

The great hedge dividing the garden from the canal prevented me seeing the final catastrophe, which occurred among the trees on the borders of the forest. I rushed out, and soon the dreadful news was confirmed: the plane had come down about a mile and a half away, the pilot being killed on the spot and the observer picked up dying.

What an awful sight for a mother with her only son in the Flying Corps!

My car, suffering from the pretty hard service I have exacted from it, has been sent by General Chichester to the military workshops at Boulogne-sur-Mer. They say it will take a fortnight. That means, of course, a month at least. I am, I believe, the only civilian authorized to have my car repaired in the British Army workshops!

Thursday: 17*th.*

King George has spent a whole week in the midst of his armies, living with the troops and chatting familiarly with officers and men.

When he left France he addressed a grateful message to the British Army, which ended thus:

"I return to Great Britain prouder than ever of you all. May God lead you to victory."

Saturday: 19*th.*

Yesterday I had to dinner here Captain Malcolm Ross, a correspondent attached to the N.Z. Army.

He recounted his war experiences. At the declaration of war he went with the first detachment of N.Z. troops to seize the little German Colony of Samoa. It was not a very difficult task—a landing, the collection of a hundred or so German families, and the Union Jack flying in place of the Black Eagle!

In 1915, landing in Gallipoli was a very different thing.

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The Turks, well entrenched, swept with their fire all the arid slopes of that peninsula, shaped like a donkey's back.

Sunday: 20th.

Religion is not neglected in the British Army. Many Sundays I have had the pleasant task of decorating the orangery for when the padre arrives to take the service.

On this beautiful summer morning I was able, through the half-closed shutters of my window, to take a photograph of the service in progress in the open air. But what I can only retain in my memory is the tremendous harmony of these male voices, singing their hymns, and giving an impression of strength and of faith. The Germans are very mistaken if they think that God is only in their country. He is also with the Allies, and this will be proved to them, but at what a sacrifice!

Sunday: 27th.

Another Zeppelin raid on England has been announced. This time London received forty explosive and incendiary bombs.

Our friends remain calm and confident.

Monday: 28th.

This month is passing out in absolute peace. There is no movement anywhere, no sound of cannon, only a gentle breeze!

How lovely it would be to live *en famille* again!

On the 26th, Commandant Tulasne, Head of the French Flying Corps in Belgium came to lunch. I invited to meet him General Godley, Major MacMahon, and Lieutenant Gordon.

Yesterday Mrs. Borden Turner and Mrs. Craven came from Rousbrugge *en route* for Paris. A handbag had been forgotten; excitement and telephone calls from the Staff to the French Mission at Cassel, which was entrusted to send it on! Mrs. Borden Turner's chauffeur is some sort of Protestant minister, as serious and grave at the wheel as when performing his sacred duties. He

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was sent back to Cassel for the bag (fifteen miles there and back!) while the ladies and myself were invited to the Staff mess and lunched with Generals Godley, Godwin, Delavoye and Lisly, and Lieutenants Gordon and Jackson.

Tuesday: 29th.

The papers are full of the changes in our military position as the result of Roumania having joined the Allies. This act gives proof of increasing cohesion between the powers of the *Entente.*

We must have courage. Little by little all honest countries and peoples will wish to be on our side.

Wednesday: 30th.

Amaury has flown to the aviation ground near Amiens where my nephew, Guy de Lubersac, is stationed. He expected to spend two hours or so with him, but a frightful storm arose, and there he was, stuck for two days, and unable to get back. On his way he passed over Morbecque, following the old familiar St. Venant road and sending a welcoming greeting to La Motte au Bois on the left, before flying over St. Pol and Doullens.

SEPTEMBER, 1916

Saturday: 2nd.

General Eydoux (Commander of the Northern Region) brought my brother Felix to see me. He has just been put on his Staff, much to his grief. But he is too old to serve any longer in the trenches.

Sunday: 3rd.

Today we had rather a dismal walk in the forest. They are cutting down our beautiful trees. The "assassins" came here for tea, with several English officers of the Forest Control and Captain de Lavergne of the French Mission.

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Monday: 4th.

An official communiqué from London announces that a Zeppelin has been brought down in flames just outside London.

The crowd cheered. A sort of fireworks!

How cruel war makes human people! When I think that even a woman like myself, with the reputation of being kind-hearted, can rejoice because German airmen have been grilled alive, it is horrible.

Perhaps among them were decent, worthy men who would have preferred peace to such adventures.

Tuesday: 5th.

Yesterday I took a day off and had a little "spree" at Boulogne-sur-Mer, lunching with my brother Felix at the Dervaux Hotel. They made me stay to dinner, too—what a festivity! The d'Hinnisdals came from Souverain Moulin in a carriage, Mr. Furnes, Red Cross delegate, and Colonel Daru.

Wednesday: 6th.

The English papers give details of the Zeppelin brought down near London. The bodies were taken out of the wreckage completely burnt.

The machinery was not greatly damaged, and was withdrawn from the débris. Experts were able to study the latest developments of Count Zeppelin's famous invention.

I have a remembrance on this subject which I now recall.

It was at Oberammergau during the last representation before the war of the famous Passion-Play.

At the most tragic moment of the Passion a great airship floated out from among the encircling mountains and passed very low above the Christ on the Cross. The actors, absorbed in their parts, paid no heed, but this could not be said of the spectators!

I thought then it was neither the time nor the place for the Germans to announce that the German Empire was higher than the crucified Christ.

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Thursday: 7th.

I have fitted up a Rest House for Australian officers. My contact with the Staff is at an end, which means that I shall no longer be amongst the first to hear any sensational news. Henceforth I shall know no more than ordinary mortals. My new guests are not badly wounded men, but those suffering from shell-shock, or those convalescent after having been gassed. But I do not think my old friends will abandon me completely; they will visit me from time to time.

Sunday: 10th.

Today I had a dinner here with Generals Allenby, Godley, and Bols, and Lieutenant Agnew. Alas! a car breakdown held up Colonel Daru and my brother Felix, who arrived when all my "lions" had gone. They only met General Allenby on the road and one late stayer here, Commandant Maleissye-Melum.

Monday: 11th.

There is great activity on every front. The papers show communiqués from the Russian, Italian, and Roumanian fronts. Even in Egypt aeroplanes have dropped bombs. It is to be hoped that the Sphinx which has resisted destruction for so many centuries will not be made a target by the Germans or their allies.

Tuesday: 12th.

Amaury writes to me that he has made a tour above our lines, and has seen the massed troops from the air —an imposing sight.

Two enemy aeroplanes flying towards England were signalled to him.

He was flying for two and a half hours with the lights of Antwerp beneath him. He tells me that he was decorated during a touching ceremony which took place at St. Pol-sur-Mer. Oh, how sorry I am I was not there!

In time of war, wives and mothers have no privileges.

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Amaury's Mention in Despatches

The General commanding the Army groups of the Nord mentions Lieutenant de La Grange (Amaury) Lieutenant of Reserves Squadron M.F. 36: "This daring Pilot Officer is noted for his reconnoitring and bombardments—at night especially. Particularly on the 9th August he took an important photograph 15 kilometres within the enemy lines.

"While performing this operation he was subject to a violent enemy bombardment."

(Signed) Foch.

General Headquarters.
10*th September*, 1916.

Wednesday: 13*th.*

This citation refers to the famous photograph of the Tirpitz battery. Amaury has given me the details of this exploit, although he dislikes speaking of his own deeds, especially in wartime, when one sees everywhere the warning: "Méfiez-vous, taisez-vous, des oreilles ennemies vous écoutent."

He flew over the battery, and his observer photographed it, but the bombardment became so intense that he escaped by flying over the Channel. He then returned and photographed it a second time. Again he had to escape the bombardment by flying out to sea. A third time he returned, and, flying low over the battery, took another photograph, which turned out to be as good as the other two.

A curious point was noticed. A cart, to which were harnessed a pair of horses, came into each photograph, and in each they were a little further on, which proves that the photographs were not taken at the same time. It was on this expedition that Amaury returned with twenty-eight holes in the wings of his aeroplane, and a control cut.

Saturday: 16*th.*

Yesterday in the Chamber an announcement by the Government drew a very large Assembly.

In the Diplomatic Gallery were the Ambassadors of the Allied Powers and the King of Montenegro.

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M. Briand read the announcement and spoke of two outstanding recent events: the Declaration of War of Italy against Germany and that of Roumania against Austria-Hungary. "France welcomes these two facts with emotion and joy."

They bring to the sacred cause for which the Allied Armies are fighting a new force, which morally and materially must contribute greatly to victory.

His speech was received with prolonged applause.

Sunday: 17th.

The 15th was a day of sensations. It was then that the tanks, a British invention, a kind of wheelless armoured car, which crawls along like a caterpillar, came into action for the first time, surmounting all obstacles and filling the enemy with panic. So far an important advance has been made, and 4,000 prisoners captured along a front of 10 kilometres. My guests are extremely sorry that this secret was not kept a little longer, until they had thousands of tanks ready to force the Hindenburg Line over a large sector of the front.

Monday: 25th.

Another raid has taken place over Essex. It was the thirty-eighth time England had been visited, this time by a squadron of twelve Zeppelins, making a great noise.

The damage is pretty heavy, a large number of small houses having been demolished and burnt.

Two Zeppelins were brought down and the crews interned. Well, two the less, but how many must they have to be able to make flights like this?

Thursday: 28th.

The English communiqué speaks of brilliant operations performed by the British Army to the north of the Somme. It has completed its success of the 15th by a new advance. The fighting has been in the Combles region.

This locality, a formidable fortress, has been brilliantly carried by the Allies. The enemy suffered heavy losses,

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whereas those of the English were, in view of the results obtained, comparatively small.

The liaison between Franco-British troops was perfect, and the first Corps of Lille (which entered the village) shared a huge booty.

Friday: 29th.

The President of the Republic has telegraphed to the King of England, congratulating him on the brilliant success of the British troops.

To this telegram the King has replied warmly:

"I hasten to thank you, M. le Président, for your warm congratulations on the success of my Army during the last two days. This could only have been obtained with the help of the brave French troops, fighting on our right for the common cause."

Saturday: 30th.

Yesterday, on the invitation of General Allenby, I left for his Headquarters to meet the King of Montenegro. In wartime one knows the hour at which one starts, but one never knows the time of arrival. On turning into the road from Morbecque to St. Venant, the chauffeur, owing to the fog, did not see an enormous hole made by a bomb dropped from an aeroplane which was attacking munition dumps. The car plunged into it, with the result that the axle was broken, and it was impossible to continue our journey. To forego seeing the King of Montenegro, that was nothing; but to miss seeing General Allenby, that mattered a great deal more! I managed to telephone to him, and he expressed his regrets, saying that it was a pity I would not see the King of Montenegro, as he was wearing such a pretty little skirt. I replied that his Scotch regiments had shown me the prettiest skirts in the world!

I am leaving for Paris today, and lunching en route with my brother at Boulogne-sur-Mer.

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OCTOBER, 1916

Sunday: 1*st.*

There has been a further exchange of congratulations between General Joffre and Sir Douglas Haig:

"Allow me, my dear General," said Joffre, "to take this opportunity of saying that the combined offensive that we have just made has drawn still closer the ties between our two Armies."

Germany speaks of a "renewal" of her submarine war —a form of war, as it happens, that has never been stopped.

Sunday: 22*nd.*

Yesterday there was held at Boulogne, a conference between the French and English Ministers.

The British Government was represented by Messrs. Asquith, Lloyd George, Balfour, Sir William Robertson, and General Sir Douglas Haig.

Wednesday: 25*th.*

The glorious death of the young American airman, Norman Prince, killed while serving France, has inspired a fine article in the *Temps*, entitled "The Union of Tears." These tears, it says, will have accomplished their sublime miracle: they will have sealed, in spite of time, distance, and customs, the union of souls so far apart as seemed to make it impossible that they should ever know each other.

Saturday: 28*th.*

An active success of our troops. They re-took in twenty-four hours the armoured fortress of Douaumont, which had fallen into German hands on the 24th February last.

In a few hours our valiant soldiers under General Mangin have destroyed the whole eight months' work of the Crown Prince's armies.

All the English papers are rejoicing with us, and the

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Daily News writes thus: "The French have struck at Verdun a subtle and terrible blow—whose effect has been magnificent."

General Nivelle, commanding the armies at Verdun, addressing congratulations to General Mangin's troops on the re-taking of Douaumont, ends with these words: "You have deserved well of your country."

Monday: 30th.

All this month there has been heavy fighting on the Belgian front. Enemy aeroplanes have been extremely active and given us no peace. Sometimes squadrons of six or eight pass over this house five or six times in one night. They get petrol somewhere near Lille, and their objective is Hazebrouck. They generally hover over us for a good long moment before slipping away from the searchlights (which are flashing and turning all night long), and the anti-aircraft guns which follow them along the roads. We are never their deliberate objective, because the German Staffs are too afraid of reprisals, in event of their attacking the Allied Staffs. But, of course, we always run the risk of stray bombs here and there! One or two have fallen close by, making huge craters.

The rain here is making trench warfare unutterably hard. The Dominion and Colonial troops especially are suffering severely. Sometimes the mud is so deep and claylike that the very shells cannot burst, but simply fall embedded. At other times the ground is frozen as hard as cement, and when shells burst they cause the most terrible slaughter.

When the N.Z. Division under General Russell went to the front and the Staff was established at Estaires, in one sector the N.Z. troops had been holding the trenches for twenty-three days without being relieved.

Many of the Australian and N.Z. troops are Catholics. The Bishop of Auckland is a man of strong personality, whose influence has already made itself felt at the front.

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NOVEMBER, 1916

Wednesday: 1*st.*

An event which may have far-reaching consequences happened a few days ago.

The English steamer *Marina* was sunk and many Americans drowned. The U.S.A. Consul at Queenstown is holding an inquiry to discover if Germany has broken her engagements. How long will it take the United States to find out the worth of German promises? When her own interest is involved her most sacred engagements count for nought?

Saturday: 4*th.*

Another good communiqué! We have re-taken the Fort de Vaux. It is, of course, only an episode in the battle begun on the 24th October, but it is a success. We are making progress. The German army shows evident signs of discouragement. The prisoners are no longer arrogant, and give one to understand that starvation quite as much as artillery may defeat them.

Saturday: 11*th.*

Wilson has come out victor in the struggle caused by the presidential re-election.

He has beaten Mr. Hughes by thirteen votes.

This is an event which may well change the face of things.

It is up to the Allies now to use a little intelligent diplomacy to bring within our ranks a powerful recruit. Public opinion will, of course, be the deciding factor.

We may hope some event may now occur which will arouse popular indignation over the water. It will have to be something directly affecting America—since her attitude is one of entire disassociation from European interests.

Thursday: 23*rd.*

The papers are full of the news of the death of Francis-Joseph, the oldest of European rulers. It is

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the Archduke Charles Francis Joseph who succeeds to the twin kingdoms of Austria-Hungary.

Friday: 24th.

An English hospital ship has just been sunk in the Ægean Sea. Was it a mine or a torpedo?

It was going to Salonica with 120 nurses and 890 doctors and voluntary Red Cross helpers.

There were fifty lives lost.

Terrible consequences of these floating engines of destruction sown now in every sea! They are likely to remain a danger to navigation even after the war.

How has anyone dared to drop the first mines, to build the first submarines! Could the inventors ever be sure of harming only the enemy? How infamous it seems to threaten the safety of one's own people, even, and those taking no actual part in the fighting.

Monday: 27th.

The British Admiralty announce another attempted raid by German torpedo boats in the North Sea.

They tried to attack the coast south of the Thames estuary. One torpedo struck a ship without injuring anyone and not a single shell dropped on the open town of Ramsgate.

DECEMBER, 1916

Saturday: 2nd.

The funeral of the Emperor Francis-Joseph took place in Vienna with all the ancient Spanish pomp and ceremonial which Austrian royal étiquette still retains.

Along the whole route were troops, and the Sovereign was buried in the crypt of the Church of the Capucines.

Tuesday: 5th.

There is a Ministerial crisis in England.

No one knows if things will be settled today.

Mr. Lloyd George asks that the number of the mem-

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bers of the War Council may be reduced from eleven to three or four, including Mr. Bonar Law and himself.

But one thing is certain, Mr. Asquith has himself said in the House that there will be no change in the direction of foreign policy.

Sunday: 10*th.*

The new British Cabinet has been formed. It will undertake the duties of the old War Council. Mr. Lloyd George is Leader of the Commons.

Thursday: 14*th.*

We have a change here in our high command. General Nivelle is Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the North and the North-East. This title now conferred on General Nivelle is the one borne by General Joffre from the mobilization till the Decree of the 2nd December, 1915, which made him Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies.

Saturday: 23*rd.*

The U.S.A. have addressed a Note to the belligerent Powers demanding a statement of their aims in the war and their conditions of peace.

The American Note is very differently welcomed in different quarters, and has produced a profound impression. It is being much discussed.

What does America want as mediator?

The objectives of the war can only be explained by Germany since she was the aggressor!

And peace can only be considered on the day when Germany makes her overtures to obtain it!

Thursday: 28*th.*

General Joffre has been made Maréchal of France.

The Government, desiring to recognize the great services rendered by the General, have resuscitated this old dignity.

This Decree of the 26th December is at once a fine act of Justice to past service and a striking mark of confidence in the future.

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Saturday: 30th.

I had asked Amaury, who can get pretty easily to Dunkirk, to organize for Christmas Eve a concert at La Motte, with Devries, of the Opéra Comique, and Staub, the great pianist, but he was not able to find them as they are chauffeurs to two Generals who were away on tours of inspection!

But he wired that he had just got them, so I sent out invitations at once. Thus it is that we kept Christmas rather late this year!

The day before the concert I got this letter from Amaury:

"I am sending you my orderly and another man to help with the service. I will bring a hundred oysters for the General's table, cigars and cigarettes. The piano-tuner arrives by the seven o'clock train, and Devries and Staub at the same time. See that there are slices of bread and butter to eat with the oysters."

What solicitude on the part of a brother-in-arms for the British fighters!

"Footit" of the Nouveau Cirque was "requisitioned" from the English Hospital at Hazebrouck, and General Russell put the Maori troop of dancers from the Isle of Raratonga at my disposal for the general entertainment.

Twelve men of bronze, superb living statues, executed savage dances showing their marvellous white teeth, rolling ferocious eyes, threatening with their clenched fists, and showing, in fact, every sign of rage and fury! This warlike dance horrified me, and I said so to General Russell.

"*That's* not a war dance," he said cheerfully; "the war one is quite another thing! If you saw *that*, now! This is a love dance!" (I can and do piously thank Heaven that it saw fit to let me be born a French and not a Maori woman.)

It appears that, in Raratonga, the ladies sit in the middle of the circle of leaping, ferocious adorers and, with a sort of tambourine and their own voices, excite still more the ardour of the dancers!

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General Russell tells me why they were obliged to rule out the real war dances from all programmes. In a raid made by four Maoris in a German trench, only one returned, so the Maoris refused to dance their war dances until they had their revenge. With them it is not "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," but ten Germans to one Maori!

The performance was held in our little theatre in the orangery, the varied programme being provided by the artistes Staub and Devries and other kind people, followed by the dance of our allies from the Antipodes and the absurdities of Footit, who appeared on the stage in an incredible dress, with a minute kitten (representing a tiger) on a leash!

The large audience adjourned afterwards to the hall, where my daughter had arranged little tables, fifty-five covers! Candles, for lack of candlesticks, were stuck in fir cones. In my private dining-room were covers for eighteen. At my table were the Generals of the Armies, of the Corps, and of Brigades, while in the hall each small table was presided over by a lady, who was allowed to choose her fellow-guests. Emilie had the two Bourbon-Parme princes at hers. From my little dining-room we heard so much laughter that there was no doubt they were enjoying themselves!

Our soirée finished late as Staub and Devries charmed us with their music.

It seems extraordinary that such careless gaiety *can* exist even for a few hours so near the horrors of the front, but the truth is that those who are always so near death feel the absolute need of moral and physical relaxation. They amuse themselves with a mere nothing—and laugh to forget the morrow!

Among our guests were the two Princes of Bourbon-Parme; Generals of Army, Allenby, Byng, Horne; of Corps, Godley, Hunter-Weston, Jacob; of Brigade, Godwin, Russell, White, Carruthers, Chichester, Delavoye, and Leslie; Colonel King, Captain Malcolm Ross (correspondent of a N.Z. paper), Captain Delannoy (Belgium Army), Captain de Montgascon, Captain de Maleissye Melun, Captain de Noirmont, Commandant

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Tulasne, Lieutenant Fleury, Commandant Bornes, Lieutenant de Lastours, Duc d'Ursel (Belgian Army), Prince de Croÿ (Belgian Army), Countess Van den Steen, Marchioness de l'Homel, Marchioness d'Argent, Madame Liouville, General Eydoux, and my brother, Commandant de Chaumont-Quitry, etc.

Sunday: 31*st.*

Today I had a letter from my brother describing his return with General Eydoux from our dinner-party. As the headlights were not working, they lost their way and got to Boulogne somewhere about 5.30 in the morning!

They might well have been on the "spree" at Montmartre!

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JANUARY, 1917

Tuesday: 2nd.

Another year of war has rolled on, bearing with it the floods of blood and tears, and yet without exhausting those springs from which we draw our moral energy and our confidence. This New Year has called for a friendly exchange of telegrams between the President of the Republic, the King of England, and the King of the Belgians.

The Tsar also and the King of Serbia have both sent good wishes to the President, which have been as sincerely returned. . . .

Amaury has taken a flat in Paris for his wife.

I am very happy at the near prospect of being a grandmother. If it is a boy—there is another little poilu!

Sunday: 7th.

The papers are discussing at length a conference which has just taken place in Rome where there were accredited representatives of France, England, and Russia—Ministers as well as Generals.

They see in this meeting a symbol of the increasing closeness of the tie between the Allied Nations, and the *Giornale d'Italia* says: "We earnestly hope, then, that in Rome a plan of action may be formed which will lead the glorious peoples of the *Entente* to victory."

Tuesday: 9th.

M. Briand has returned from Rome, bringing back the best impressions of both the official and private conversations that he has had with Ministers, and in political and military quarters. There was complete union between Messrs. Lloyd George, Briand, and Boselli.

It seems as if the clouds which appeared to be rising between the Allies have been dispersed, and that perfect agreement now reigns with regard to future operations.

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Wednesday: 10*th.*

An ultimatum has been sent to Greece, signed by the four Great Powers of the *Entente.*

What will be the result?

Friday: 12*th.*

Greece has accepted the ultimatum of the four Powers of the *Entente.* Let us hope our Expeditionary Force at Salonica will now be in greater security.

Saturday: 18*th.*

The newspaper *Le Temps* publishes the reply of the Allies to President Wilson's Note. It is a long document, in which, after paying due honour to the high sentiment by which the American Note is actuated, it shows the responsibilities of war—the losses and suffering, and the Allied desire to be assured of a peace based on the principles of Liberty and Justice.

The Belgian Government, while associating itself entirely with the Allied reply, has also sent a Note expressing its gratitude for the sympathy which the American people has shown it since the beginning of the war.

Monday: 15*th.*

I have taken up my abode in Paris for a few days, Felix having offered to lend me, during his absence, our old family house (18, Boulevard des Invalides). Here I am quite near the flat Amaury has rented, and so can often see Emily, my daughter-in-law.

Saturday: 20*th.*

Considerable emotion is being shown by the U.S.A. over the presence of a German "pirate" in the Atlantic.

This ship seems to be sailing under the colours of the American Mercantile Marine and carrying masked batteries.

The State Department is awaiting the report of the official inquiry with considerable anxiety.

Sunday: 21*st.*

This evening I held in my arms what our British allies call a "war baby," in the person of Amicie de La

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Grange, my granddaughter. Soon I must go back to my large soldier family, where there are also "war babies" —but on this subject silence is perhaps more discreet!

Monday: 22nd.

Everyone is talking of a huge explosion there has been in a munitions factory in London, near the river. It seems to have been a real catastrophe. There are many victims—60 killed, 100 badly hurt, and about 200 slightly wounded.

The violence of the explosion was felt at a great distance, and heart-breaking scenes took place—scenes of unparalleled terror, too. Great floods of burning liquids and red-hot iron were flung in all directions.

The whole district around the factory appears now like the scene of a terrible earthquake. What a catastrophe!

Thursday: 25th.

From the British Admiralty comes the news of a slight engagement in the North Sea, off the coast of Holland, between eight patrols and enemy torpedo boat destroyers.

During the night there was also a sharp encounter between British destroyers and German torpedo boat destroyers.

One of the British destroyers was torpedoed, with a loss of 3 officers and 44 men.

Sunday: 28th.

I came back to La Motte au Bois yesterday to receive Emilie, my daughter. She has had an awful journey from Paris, taking thirteen hours to get from there to Boulogne-sur-Mer!

FEBRUARY, 1917

Monday: 5th.

Well, it is done!

The possible rupture of relations between Washington and Berlin—already foreseen—has now occurred.

The U.S.A. Government has handed passports to Count Bernstorff, German Ambassador to Washington,

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and has recalled the American Ambassador to Berlin, Mr. Gerard.

This diplomatic rupture has made an enormous impression, but created no surprise.

Mr. Wilson went himself to speak in Congress and to explain the reasons for his determination.

The place was packed, everyone being deeply impressed by the importance of an act that would have so great a repercussion on all nations.

When Mr. Wilson ended his speech the whole of Congress rose and applauded, and remained standing until the President had left the hall.

Wednesday: 7th.

The papers are full of the rupture between America and Germany. It is stated that President Wilson has the country behind him.

In the meantime, while waiting on events, the Americans are preparing for war.

Saturday: 17*th.*

The situation between the U.S.A. and Germany remains the same.

The former are anxious over the possible fate of the 3,000 Americans now in Germany and Austria.

They are to be sent home.

Germany is following all American news with a very lively interest.

Indeed, it is on Washington that all future German-American relations depend—if, of course, the Germans do not modify their plan of submarine warfare; one must wait.

The U.S.A. have just sent a memorandum to Austria-Hungary.

Friday: 28*rd.*

I have just heard of the death at Sebourg (near Valenciennes) of my father-in-law.[1] He has had the

[1] Alexis Aimé Charles, Baron de La Grange, died at his Château de Sebourg, near Valenciennes, on the 11th February, 1917, in his ninety-second year.

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grief, in his extreme old age, of seeing the enemy occupation of his country. We know that he suffered terrible mental anguish on this account, though we have very rarely been able to get news of him. Louis, his son, sent away his wife and daughters and remained at Sebourg with his father in order to protect, if possible, his interests in the mines of Anzin, founded by his grandfather and managed by his father in his turn.

This news gives me great pain.

My father-in-law, with his large heart and fine brain, was respected by all, whether members of his own family or the world in general. It seems that even the most cruel enemy might have shown some consideration in such a case, but, according to the news that reaches us, the life of this good and noble old man was one of privation from the beginning of the war.

Sunday: 25*th.*

A Messageries Maritimes mailboat (China route), carrying riflemen and Colonials, has just been torpedoed in the Mediterranean by an enemy submarine. The mailboat was escorted by two T.B.D.'s, which were able to save 1,450 lives, but some were lost, adding still further to the sad list of the civilian victims of this cruel war.

Monday: 26*th.*

The submarine warfare continues. Seven Dutch steamers have been torpedoed by the Germans.

The Dutch Press naturally protests against the attacks of Germany on their merchant marine, and the *Vaderland* adds: "We should endeavour to obtain justice for our little nation."

It is a pity if this doesn't touch the neutrals in their national egotism.

They are looking forward to reaping the fruits of the war—thinking it will take the belligerent nations long to recover their prosperity.

According to financiers, the victorious nations are likely to suffer nearly as much as the conquered. One side will be almost as completely ruined as the other.

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Wednesday: 28*th.*

There was a naval battle during Sunday night. A patrol of destroyers met several enemy destroyers, and the result was a short engagement.

Another force of T.B.D.'s bombarded the open towns of Broadstairs and Margate. The material damage was slight, but unfortunately a woman and some children were killed and two others badly wounded.

MARCH, 1917

Thursday: 1*st.*

During a visit to Paris I had the pleasure of lunching with General Birdwood. He was on his way back from Cap Martin, where he had been sent after an attack of influenza. Even when I am far from the front I never miss an opportunity of seeing my British friends.

I feel sure that even after the war I shall retain these friendships, which, born as they have been in these sad times, are likely to be so much the more durable because we have understood and appreciated each other in the face of danger.

The torpedoings continue without cessation. An English Atlantic liner, the *Laconia*, was torpedoed without warning.

The sea was very calm and the time just after dinner, when it was quite dark.

There was difficulty in launching the lifeboats, though there was no panic. The Cunard Line announce the loss of three passengers dead and three missing

For the U.S.A. this business of the *Laconia* is another of the same sort as that of the *Lusitania*.

The fact that American lives have been lost again in this attack is likely to push President Wilson to immediate action.

Saturday: 17*th.*

Telegrams from Petrograd, which had been stopped for some days, are now coming through, and brought sensational news this morning!

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The Tsar has abdicated in favour of his son—delegating the powers of Regent to his brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch.

The abdication has followed as the result of several days of revolution.

The *Temps*, describing events, writes:

"The revolution has broken out and is continuing at the present moment. One after the other those regiments hitherto regarded as most faithful supporters of the old régime have come under the Red Flag."

There was a rumour, although unconfirmed, of the arrest of the Tsar. The Tsarina remains at Tsarkoié-Selo.

Sunday: 18*th.*

The Tsar has been compelled to abdicate in favour of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, and not of his son; and the papers publish the text of his Manifesto to his people.

While these events are passing in Russia the aerial warfare continues.

There has been another Zeppelin raid on England, and in France our anti-aircraft brought down a Zeppelin at Compiègne. There was not a single victim among the civilian population.

Tuesday: 20*th.*

On the 17th the enemy gave way over a large area on the Somme as the result of British bombardment. Can it possibly be the beginning of the German retreat? Ten days ago the Australians entered Bapaume. The enemy had shown his usual charming courtesy in abandoning the town; they left behind a bomb timed to explode later on. Its victims were civilians, amongst them two deputies, who were seriously wounded. That is the kind of visiting card that the Germans leave us; but we remain indifferent, much preferring this souvenir of their departure to their actual visit!

Péronne has been captured again by the British.

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Thursday: 22nd.

The papers are very full of Russian events, and now give full details of the Tsar's abdication. They speak of the week as being a historic one. The Winter Palace has been declared national property.

And all this time the poor little Tsarevitch has measles and a high temperature.

The Press also alludes to the murder of Rasputin—that fanatical monk who had become the "familiar" of the Imperial Family.

He was killed by Prince Yussupoff, and his body flung into the Neva.

Friday: 23rd.

On our front affairs are going well.

The Germans are falling back. Noyon is free, and Roye, too, but on their retreat the Germans have destroyed everything they possibly could in the territory they abandoned. This form of devastation can only add to their bad reputation, as it is not productive of any advantage to them. Why can't they understand the damage they do to themselves, even in the eyes of neutrals, in thus exceeding all accepted ideas of what is permitted in war?

Saturday: 24th.

The Emperor of Russia has arrived at Tsarkoié-Selo.

Today he is no more than "Colonel Nicholas Romanoff." He is under a strong guard. We do not know much of this huge country, but it is disquieting that there should be disintegration at the very moment when union is so necessary for victory.

Thursday: 29th.

I went to Paris again. On the 24th I was dining at Lucas's Restaurant (Place de la Madeleine), when I noticed a Russian officer who seemed trying to attract my attention, and I suddenly recognized one of my nephews, a French officer attached to the Allied Mission in Russia. He invited me to his table and told me how

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he was obliged, according to circumstances, to change his uniform, and how he might be French, English, or Russian in turn, as his work for the Allies demanded.

He says the Russian revolution may have the most profound repercussion on the war, as it is a revolution prepared and fomented by the Germans, with the object of freeing large numbers of their forces on the Russian front and bringing them to the French and Belgian fronts.

Friday: 30th.

For the second time since the beginning of the war Dunkirk has been bombarded by German torpedo boats, which have sent sixty projectiles. Luckily, Emily is still in Paris with her baby, and I hope will remain there till this district is safer.

There is a possibility, too, of Amaury having a squadron on the Champagne front.

APRIL, 1917

Tuesday: 3rd.

Yesterday evening, at 8.45, Mr. Wilson presented himself before Congress and read his message asking it to declare a state of war between the U.S.A. and the Imperial German Government.

Certainly there is no hope of military help from America just yet, but what a strength of morale and material she can bring to us!

This great country will be a formidable weight in the balance against Germany. They will send no more food and munitions to the Germans, anyway, and famine, as much as lack of war material, will force them to shorten all their fronts!

Thursday: 5th.

Now we read the best of President Wilson's message. It is really war. When the President read out the words, "We will not choose the road of submission," the

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applause was so loud and prolonged as to prevent him continuing for some minutes. At the end of the speech, the members of the Congress brought out little flags from their pockets and waved them vigorously.

Enthusiasm runs high in the streets of New York, where they are singing the National Anthem.

Friday: 18*th.*

The bombardment of Rheims is still very violent.

The last of the inhabitants have been evacuated, as the town is full of asphyxiating gases. Only officials are remaining at their posts.

Today is my birthday. Alas! I am no longer twenty, and twice in my life have I seen France invaded.

This time the trial is longer and I am more directly involved, and am a good deal more of an age to understand the sad reality.

Sunday: 15*th.*

Amaury, who has been waiting every day to take command of a squadron near Chalons-sur-Marne for service on one of the fronts (probably Champagne, which he knows) has just heard, with stupefaction, that the War Office is sending him to New York. Circumstances have hastened the forming of an Inter-Allied Service and the sending of a Mission to the U.S.A. for the co-operation of the American aviation service with ours.

Commandant Tulasne, with whom Amaury has been working for several months, has been designated Chief of the Mission, and has made it a condition that, as he does not know English, he must have Amaury with him. Amaury is annoyed at not having been consulted in the matter, as he would not have hesitated a moment if he could have chosen between this and a squadron of the new Sopwith machines.

He adds, however, that, as it must be, he will undertake it with his whole heart, since it seems as interesting now as later it will be useful.

I am going to Paris to get little Amicie and her nurse, as she is being confided to me during the parents'

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absence. She is not yet four months old; young, indeed, to go to the front!

Monday: 16*th.*

Emily is going with Amaury, and also undertaking a mission, hers being to collect funds for our war charities. They go with General Joffre's Mission.

He is accompanied by Commandant Requin, whom I knew when he was at Cassel.

The mission of Commandant Tulasne and Amaury will be to organize, in complete agreement with the American Government, the immediate departure of some squadrons, and to arrange for the construction in the U.S.A. of motors for aircraft.

My mission is to remain at home and look after their baby.

Wednesday: 18*th.*

I have just received a wire from Amaury and Emily saying they sail to-morrow from the Havre. Early in the morning I rushed off at once in the car, but when I got there I found that the sudden appearance of submarines off the coast had caused a change of port. I was told it was probably Boulogne, which was maddening, as, of course, Boulogne is near La Motte, and I need not have made the long journey to Havre. As it was, I feared I might not have time to reach them. An old friend, the Governor of Dieppe, got a telegram through to my brother Felix at Boulogne announcing my arrival, but, alas! in spite of all the car could do—and the chauffeur "let her rip"—we arrived too late. The boat had sailed. I was very grieved, but Felix told me that the children were aware of, and appreciated, my effort to see them.

Never for one moment from those first awful hours have I desired to keep my son from his duty, but I do thank God at this moment that I am to have a respite from the incessant anxiety on his account.

It appears that Commandant Tulasne, who greatly appreciates him, refused to undertake the mission unless Amaury went with him.

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Thursday: 19*th.*

I decided to rest for twenty-four hours at Boulogne, near Felix, and when I got back to La Motte au Bois, I found Amicie in the arms of the tall Gordon, A.D.C. to General Godley, who had come to see me.

He says she is his fiancée, but he does not promise to be faithful to her for eighteen years, which does not surprise us!

Friday: 20*th.*

There is an Anglo-French offensive on the Aisne. What will be the results? German resistance is hardening on the crest by the Chemin des Dames; to the east of Arras, too, there is heavy fighting. With the spring there is renewed activity.

Laurels are opening their buds on the vast battlefields —but laurels gained at the cost of what sacrifices!

Monday: 23*rd.*

Amaury writes to me that he is embarking on the s.s. *Orduna* at Liverpool, and that the watch kept on possible spies is so severe that he has been obliged to consent to have his finger-prints taken!

He says it is the first time he has believed himself a criminal!

Friday: 27*th.*

Mr. Beach Thomas, correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, gives long accounts of the Franco-British offensives, which are continuing with success.

On its side, the *Last News* from Munich writes: "Here and there we have had to withdraw our lines, but the German front is as solid as a wall of steel."

And the *Neue Badische Landeszeitung* adds: "It is the most formidable battle yet recorded in the history of the world."

Monday: 30*th.*

Since the 9th (Easter Monday) a terrible battle has been fought at Arras, the 3rd and 4th Armies being engaged (Generals Byng and Rawlinson).

On the Sunday morning, when the market square of

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Bailleul was crowded with people, an aeroplane dropped bombs from about 1,200 feet, with the most frightful results. There are many victims, military and civil.

MAY, 1917

Tuesday: 1*st.*

I received today this nice letter from General Allenby, Chief of the 3rd Army, who is at the Château de Bryas, near St. Pol-sur-Ternoise (Somme):

19*th April.*

MY DEAR BARONESS,

My wife writes that she has had a charming letter from you, congratulating her on the success of my army. It is so kind of you to give her such a great pleasure. We had a really big victory on the 9th-11th of this month, taking 8,000 prisoners and 159 guns in my army alone. Since then we have gone on, but more slowly, and my present total is about 10,000 prisoners and over 160 guns. I, for my part, congratulate you on the successes gained by the French armies in Champagne. I really think that the tide is beginning to set in our favour.

My regret is that, as my army advances, I must leave this delightful château.[1] I am moving, on Tuesday, some ten miles farther to the east. My new château is not to be compared with this; but it is not uncomfortable. I am afraid it is not on the Paris road; but perhaps you will have time to come the extra distance sometimes, and lunch with me.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
EDMUND H. ALLENBY.

Thursday: 3*rd.*

Yesterday I had a little dinner-party here. My guests were my brother, General Eydoux, Colonel de Villeneuve, General Hunter-Weston (commanding the 8th Corps), Major-General Chichester, General Gwynn (Chief of Staff to General Godley), General Bainbridge (commanding the 25th Division), a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Major Auckland (Claims Commission),

[1] Château de Bryas.

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Colonel Harris (A.D.C. to General Bainbridge), Commandant de Maleissye-Melun, Countess Van den Steen, and my daughter Emilie.

I have had a great deal of trouble over my grandchild's English nurse. She neglected the poor baby, who did not thrive, and in the end her frivolous behaviour with the soldiers became so impossible that I have had to get rid of her. I now have the old "nou-nou" who was with Emilie's boys, and all is well. The doctor at my Officers' Rest-house was as pleased as I was to see her go, for he says that her influence prevented the officers from enjoying all the benefits of peace and quietness. What with her possible effect on Amicie and her obvious effect on the officers, it was a relief to us both to see the last of her.

Friday: 4th.

The fine weather has come back, and Théophile, as in times of peace, has brought out the shrubs from the orangery and put them in front of the château. I try to see in this a happy message of the future! Poor laurels! I have had hard work to prevent them all from being cast out to give place to office necessities which seem to invade every roofed-in part of the place!

But, luckily, the orangery serves as a theatre for the different "troupes" of actors, and my evergreens are used to decorate the house. So they have a military use, the only one that counts in these times!

Saturday: 5th.

A Tommy of the Australian Corps has asked my advice on an affair of the heart. He tells me that in Egypt he met a French girl, to whom he got engaged. Then he was sent to Flanders. Whilst there he received a letter telling him that she has married another man in Alexandria. He wants to know whether she did this of her own free will, or if it was under pressure from her family.

Our Minister at Alexandria and I have been exchanging letters, worthy of a scene in a play, only to arrive at the sad certitude that the unfaithful one

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chose her own fate, owing to the monetary advantages offered by her new fiancé. To save the honour of France they tell me she is not French but Levantine.

I broke the news to the poor neglected lover, assuring him—though I am not sure that I am right—that a French girl would not have been unfaithful. I advised him to take the opportunity, when he is back in his own country, to find someone to replace her.

Monday: 7th.

Yesterday I was invited to lunch by General Hunter-Weston to meet my brother Felix and General Eydoux at the Château Lovie near Ypres, belonging to the Count de Bergheyck. The Count has such a large family—twelve of them—that he frequently has to ask his wife their names.

The General gave us a very good lunch. The owners of the house were there as well as General Nollet, Lieutenant Valot, Countess Van den Steen, Madame Terlinden, Captain Borthwick, A.D.C., Captain de St. André, Major Laurie, and Emilie. The guard of honour received us, and during the meal the pipers played.

My brother and the General reviewed the men afterwards. The perfection and precision of their movements were marvellous.

Later on General Hunter-Weston took his guests to Ypres, and I came back here, where General Bainbridge's Division (25th) was to give a "Follies" entertainment on the tennis court. General Legge is the highly gifted organiser of the "troupe."

My brother, General Hunter-Weston, and his guests joined us here for the entertainment. A dinner-party followed, at which I entertained Commandant de Maleissye, Captain de Montaigu, Lieutenant Serge Fleury, General Eydoux, Felix, and the Countess Van den Steen.

Tuesday: 8th.

I have had good news of our travellers and of their safe arrival.

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They only left Liverpool on the 15th to put the enemy submarines off the scent and made a détour which prolonged the crossing. General Joffre's great popularity is helping recruiting very much, it seems, and also the acceptance of compulsory service, which has been voted.

Amaury finds a great change in New York since he was there three years ago. The people are beginning to understand that the war is a more direct threat to the United States than they realized.

The reception of the General in Washington was magnificent, the whole of Congress rising to acclaim him. He is making a tour in the West at present, visiting Chicago, Springfield, St. Louis, and will end by going to New York.

At a dinner at Harry's Restaurant, Amaury's presence in uniform made a sensation.

The orchestra played "La Marseillaise," and everyone cheered France.

Thursday: 10*th.*

The King of England has telegraphed his congratulations to the President of the Republic on the continued success of the French Armies in their offensive.

M. Poincaré has replied in the same terms about the valiant British Army, their companions in arms.

Saturday: 12*th.*

I went yesterday to Etaples to fetch Mrs. Chanler and Mdlle. Thomson.

Emilie and I had lunched with Colonel de Bellaigue at Montreuil, who arranged a charming tea for these ladies.

He is living in a delightfully situated house belonging to an American artist, Mr. Howland.

This reception made an agreeable impression on the two ladies, who are devoting themselves to war work, one in America and the other in France.

Today we are going to have tea with General Godley, and on Monday there is to be a musical soirée, with Staub, the great pianist, and Devries, of the Opéra Comique.

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I do my best to encourage these affairs, which help to sustain the morale of the combatants when they are resting, far from their homes and families.

I have just had coal brought to the château, and while I was writing out a cheque, Carlier, the bargee who had brought the coal, waited in the entrance hall.

I found him contemplating with deep interest the figure dressed as a Red Indian, which forms part of my Canadian hunting collection.

The Indian stands there with his great headdress of eagle's feathers, and the human scalps fastened to the leather leggings.

With the delightful mystic naïveté of the Fleming Carlier asked me if the figure represented St. Thomas of Canterbury, the patron saint of the parish!

Sunday: 18*th.*

Amaury writes to me saying Emily is always being asked how she gets on with her mother-in-law. It seems French mothers-in-law in America have the reputation of being very bad-tempered.

Emily says I am a happy exception.

The War Office in America now includes business men—a very good thing; and the Board of Defence, an advisory committee, includes many well-known public men.

A big concert has been given in Joffre's honour at the Metropolitan Opera House.

There were people who paid a thousand dollars for a box, just to see the General for five minutes!

Tuesday: 15*th.*

A letter from Amaury, dated the 9th, says that Commandant Tulasne and himself found themselves surrounded by a group of air force officers, who asked for a talk on aviation.

Tulasne, who doesn't speak a word of English, passed the job on to Amaury, who says it reminded him of Roxane telling Christian to talk to her of love!

But he managed it, and made a speech for the first time in his life in English and for an hour and a half.

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Amaury was amused at the naïveté of his audience, and touched by their anxiety to learn, as they stood there all eyes and ears listening to his every word.

In Washington Mrs. Beker has most amiably put her house at the entire disposal of Amaury and Emily, including linen, silver, and furniture.

She said she would do anything for the French. Without her kindness the young couple would have had difficulty in finding a lodging as everywhere is full.

Friday: 18*th.*

I have just had this nice letter from General Eydoux, recently placed on the retired list:

18*th May*, 1917.

Alas! Madame, I have said good-bye to La Motte au Bois. The Minister is replacing us old fogies by younger men—at least, men born after us, and sometimes so much older, nevertheless! But one must bow to the decree! M. Poincaré is a mathematician! I have only four days left, and, much as I should like to, cannot find time to make my adieux in person. I shall always keep the happiest memories of my little jaunts to La Motte au Bois, and am deeply grateful for the charming welcome you always gave me. I have just been flying over Boulogne and Etaples to get a farewell glimpse of this country, which has shown itself so hospitable to me.

Saturday: 19*th.*

Yesterday I went to Boulogne to see Emilie, who is back there. Félix asked us to dinner at the Hotel Dervaux, to meet Mrs. Chanler, Mdlle. Thomson, General Eydoux, Colonel Daru, Colonel de Villeneuve Bargemon and Lieutenant Texier.

Sunday: 20*th.*

Emilie has gone back to Berry, leaving her boys here.

My guests want to put up five big tents in the park. I, only too happy to be consulted at all, do not oppose it.

Landowners would be showing a very bad grace if they refused this sort of thing. . . .

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Béthune is being subjected to continuous bombardment. What will remain of this charming town, to which we always made a point of taking our guests in the old days?

Wednesday: 23*rd.*

Commandant Tulasne and Amaury have succeeded in obtaining all the necessary equipment for the American school of aviation in France.

They are working ten hours a day and are tired out, though enthusiastic. They are leaving for Detroit and Buffalo to decide which factories shall be devoted to the construction of motors—after which Commandant Tulasne, who expects to leave for France on the 14th of June, will leave Amaury as Chief of the Mission—Amaury, who is exactly twenty-nine years old! Fortunately one's value does not depend on age.

The other parts of the programme are being kept secret, but will be realized in time.

The Mission is going to put American and French industrialists in constant association.

Saturday: 26*th.*

The British Admiralty reports the torpedoing of the transport *Transylvania*, which was attacked on the 4th May in the Mediterranean.

The number of victims is unfortunately large: 29 officers, 873 soldiers, the commander, a ship's officer, and 9 sailors have perished!

The survivors were rescued by the T.B.D.s, which were acting as escort.

Sunday: 27*th.*

Amaury writes in a letter of 17th May that though the educated classes understand the need for co-operation with us, the mass of the people do not yet realize the state of affairs.

Ideas are moving, however. The hardest thing to get moving, though, is the parliament. The Ministers are prevented from putting plans into execution owing to the lack of credits.

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But a letter, dated the 18th, says the credits have been voted.

Monday: 28th.

A large squadron of German aeroplanes bombarded on Friday several towns in the South-East of England: Dover and Folkestone especially. There were many victims, twenty-seven women and twenty-three children killed, and among the wounded many women and children, too.

The English aeroplanes chased the enemy machines and brought down three.

It is believed there were seventeen. One of the bombs fell in a busy street and killed a number of women standing outside a shop.

I have had a visit from General Horne, commanding the 1st Army. He was much amused by a little chariot, made by my grandsons, Olivier and Jacques de Bondy, the wheels of which drop off every time it is set in motion. The benevolence and kind-heartedness of one of the greatest chiefs of the British Army is very touching, and is appreciated by all who come in contact with it. However high the position of the English, they are always interested in young people.

General Birdwood says he is coming soon to see me. I am always glad to have a visit from this good friend.

Nearly every day I see again one or other of my officers of 1914. They seem agreeably surprised that I recognize them.

How should I forget those who barred the way against the enemy at that time?

Tuesday: 29th.

I returned today from a visit to an American dentist full of wonder at the marvels worked by this man. He specializes in the curing of face wounds, and gives new faces to men often frightfully disfigured! Surgical and medical science owe something to this war! The progress in both is enormous. It is wonderful to see the most deformed faces assume their normal aspect by

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means of the grafting from a comrade in hospital or a relation who has come to render this act of charity to a poor, disfigured being, who often has become repulsively ugly, merely as the result of some heroic deed accomplished on the battlefield.

JUNE, 1917

Friday: 1*st.*

I copy here a letter from my nephew, Guy de Lubersac, to Renauld's grandmother:

MADAME,

I have to tell you the sad and glorious news that poor little Renauld was, without a doubt, killed yesterday morning. Towards four o'clock the Boches exploded seven mines near the position Renauld was holding.

It was the prelude to an attack.

At the head of his men and on his own initiative he attacked the enemy. He was last seen firing his revolver at a Boche who was flinging a grenade at him.

A few minutes after I flew over the spot, little dreaming that a being so near to me had just met his death there!

I will bring to you and his parents something from this corner of the battlefield.

I have seen General Messimy today.

He spoke of his anxiety about Renauld without knowing I was in any way related to him.

His praise of his courage and fine conduct as a soldier went straight to my heart. He considered him an officer of the very best type.

I do not want to write directly to his parents.

I do not know by what means they will hear this heart-breaking news, but I thought if you knew you would, better than anyone else, soften the terrible truth! I have not told my mother either.

Believe me, etc.

GUY DE LUBERSAC,
Aviation Squadron C.2, Sector 86.

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This letter about poor Renauld (who was serving in a "crack" regiment, the 22nd Alpines) has been communicated to his parents. His father is in great grief, but his mother refuses to believe he is dead. She insists that he is a prisoner and has a firm hope that she will see him again.

His young fiancée, with a fervent belief in his lucky star, has the same conviction.

Saturday: 2nd.

I have General Birdwood here for twenty-four hours. He was welcomed with bouquets by the children. Amicie's consisted of three flowers, to which she clung, refusing to give them up. The conqueror of Bapaume and Pozières took her in his arms. What a glorious souvenir for her, and how compromising for him.

I have a new title, too—that of Lady Anzac!

In every corner of the park are tents for the convalescents of the Rest House.

What a fine target we must be for the aeroplanes! Luckily they seem to be busy elsewhere.

Tuesday: 5th.

At about midnight last night I was sitting writing in the library when I heard a loud knock at the shutter of the vestibule; I called out cautiously before opening: "Who goes there?"

"Friend," came in General Allenby's deep tones. Reassured, I opened, and he and his A.D.C. entered. They came from l'Abeele on the Belgian frontier to rejoin the 3rd Army, which he was then commanding on the Somme front.

He came to tell me great news—he is about to leave France for another front. He could only spare me a few minutes from his military duties, but it was with real feeling that I bade good-bye to this great friend of the war, who was my guest for nine months. I appreciate his qualities of frankness and loyalty and his extreme delicacy of sentiment. I have known him during very terrible times, when no one could be sure that we should not be invaded at any moment.

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Friday: 8th.

On the 5th Bailleul was heavily bombarded by big shells, and incendiary bombs dropped from aeroplanes set fire to a hidden magazine of 13,000 shells, which were destroyed, as well as five cannon.

In the afternoon of the same day three bombs set fire to a train laden with munitions, standing just outside Bailleul. General Godley, who has moved his Staff there, is commanding the 15th Corps, composed of Australians, the N.Z. Division, and the 25th Division.

Last night there was a terrible explosion of nineteen great mines, which for a year and by constant work the British have been making along the enemy trenches. Several officers and a nurse in the district came and asked me to go—in the greatest secrecy, of course—to spend the night in the open at a certain distance from the mine. The affair was timed for 3.10 in the morning. For a week past the artillery has been making preparations to attack at Messines and Wytschate, the English vanguard being ready to carry the western slopes.

At the last moment, remembering the severity of the orders obtaining at present and the difficulty of getting about, I declined, but at three in the morning I slipped out of my room and went up to a little "look-out" on the roof, and, watch in hand, and my heart beating hard and fast, I counted the minutes!

Suddenly a terrific explosion shook even the château's old walls, although it was a great distance away, and a brilliant flash of light lit up the north-east horizon. I heard afterwards that my friends were all flung on their backs and half buried in dust, seeing no more than I did, and getting a sleepless night into the bargain!

The British troops made a magnificent dash and gained 4,000 metres. The New Zealanders succeeded in getting even further. General Plumer and his Chief of Staff, General Harington, were the authors of this bold and perfectly executed plan. The tanks did fine work that day, and, in spite of counter-attacks, our Allies are holding on. This, I hope, will free Ypres!

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These colossal mines made by the British under the German trenches all blew up together, one at Factory Farm, just on the right of the Australians, and one on the flank of the N.Z. Division, a third in the centre, and others as well. Ten seconds after the explosion the barrage began, and the British rushed to the attack.

It is General Bainbridge's 25th Division which had the honour of carrying what remains of Messines—a heap of ruins! This Division is very steady and highly disciplined, and has a red horse-shoe sewn on the back of the uniform as its distinguishing mark.

Saturday: 9*th.*

For the attack at Wytschate on the 7th an enormous map in relief has been made, and the men destined to lead the attack were permitted on the eve of the battle to study on this huge map the plan of campaign. Thus each man could thoroughly understand beforehand what was expected of him on the morrow. The Australians of General Plumer's Army as well as their comrades studied before the attack the plan of campaign which was marked out on the ground and surrounded by a barrier.

Sunday: 10*th.*

I hear from New York that the President of the Board of Production called together thirty of the directors of the most important newspapers and reviews. The meeting was in a restaurant, and their help was asked to promote a strong public opinion in favour of aviation.

First a British airman was asked to speak, then Commandant Tulasne, who had just arrived from France, but, as he does not speak English, he asked Amaury to talk instead. The latter made a moving appeal for American help, showing that the air service had saved our army in August, 1914, before the Marne, and then describing what the Allies might do were they in possession of a crushingly superior air force.

He added that America alone possessed the necessary resources—machines and raw materials—for the accomplishment of this great task.

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Amaury thinks that by the spring of 1918 there will be 5,000 American machines, with first-rate pilots, on the French front.

The French Admiralty communicate the following note: "American warships have anchored off our shores."

French sailors greet the arrival of these new brothers-in-arms with joy.

Under the flag of the great Republic of the United States, they will join us in the struggle against the enemy until the final victory.

Monday: 11*th.*

The battle to the south of Ypres is continuing successfully.

The King of England has telegraphed to Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, and sends his congratulations thus:

"Please let General Plumer and the 2nd Army know that we are proud of their success, as a result of which in a few hours the enemy has retreated from strongly entrenched positions held by them for two and a half years."

Tuesday: 12*th.*

Our allies have to their credit a fine feat of arms. They have entered Messines, which has been so bitterly disputed.

The explosion of Hill 60—so long prepared—shook to their very foundations the old walls of Robert le Frison. If I had not been discreetly forewarned, I should have believed that all Bailleul had been blown up, and as General Godley's headquarters are there, I should have been in mortal anxiety.

The old French "nou-nou" who has now replaced Amicie's English nurse is taking great care of her. The baby is getting fat.

I have had a basket mounted on wheels. It is decorated with a pretty Babany stuff, and a mosquito net covers it all over. From the depths of this queer little carriage she answers the songs of the birds in the trees, and seems happy to be alive.

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Thursday: 14*th.*

Amaury writes that he cannot leave Washington, where the heat is overwhelming, as he alone is responsible for the work.

Before leaving for France, Commandant Tulasne asked for him to be promoted captain. Three "pips" are more impressive than two for the head of a mission!

Things are going badly in Greece and grave events taking place. King Constantine has been forced to abdicate, and the protecting Powers have exacted a return to constitutional government.

Troops which were on board warships have been landed at the Piræus. The ex-King advises his partisans against any attempts at resistance. He is going to leave Greece with all his family.

Friday: 15*th.*

The Follies of the 25th Division (General Bainbridge's) are playing today; to dress them, General Legge went to the Louvre Stores in Paris, where he bought 800 yards of silk brocade.

The salesman, before cutting off the stuff, went to ask leave of the manager, as he thought he had to deal with a madman. General Legge is not a madman, but a man of much intelligence, and is greatly amused, and as he paid ready money for the stuff they gave him the goods.

Saturday: 16*th.*

The papers today publish the proclamation of the new King Alexander I., and the speech of Mr. Wilson on the occasion of a "Flag Day." He speaks of the responsibilities of war, of the present situation of peace, and German intrigues, and ends by saying: "For us there could be only one choice, and that choice is made. We will pay with life and treasure for the great victory of the great faith which has seen the birth of a new glory shining upon our people."

Sunday: 17*th.*

Today I have heard that my nephew, Renauld de Chaumont-Quitry, who disappeared on the 31st of May,

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and had been given up for lost, is alive, and recovering from his wounds in a German hospital.

He was last seen in an almost hand-to-hand fight, using his revolver against a Boche, who was throwing hand-grenades at him. What a relief for everyone in his family!

I go over to see General Godley at Bailleul sometimes. I regret my guests of the Staff very much!

The day before yesterday I got a telephone message from the General asking if I could put him up for a night or two, to enable him to do a little work and get some rest. The bombardment of Bailleul is incessant; he and Charles Gordon would be glad to come over for forty-eight hours.

I gave orders to have two rooms prepared at once in the private part of my house. This afternoon the General's orderly brought over the bags, and in the evening my maid came to tell me that he had put up a new sort of mosquito net, which was apparently something marvellous. Would I go and look at it, as she proposed making me one like it. I went up at once, taking a tape measure with me, while my maid carried a lamp. We set to work to measure the mosquito net and study its arrangement, when suddenly, having raised the lamp higher to see better, I saw, not only the net, but General Godley inside it, sleeping the sleep of the just!

Considerably flustered, we beat a hurried retreat, only to run into the arms of the handsome Gordon in pyjamas, who at that moment opened his door.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "House on fire?"

"Worse," I replied. "I have seen the General in bed!"

Next day, I craftily led the subject of conversation to the alarms and excursions of the night—enemy planes had awakened me, as it happened, and the General remarked he had some hazy remembrance of lights and human forms moving in his room, but was too worn out from lack of sleep to arouse himself sufficiently to investigate.

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Monday: 18*th.*

Eugène[1] has just had a letter from a German officer saying that in a hospital of an occupied town (from which he cannot write) his son is recovering from wounds, which should leave no trace. The German officer adds that as soon as the wounded man can be moved he will be taken to a concentration camp in Germany, and will then write himself.

One is glad to be able to note that sometimes at least—if not often—a kind heart is found among the enemy, which, pitying the anguish of a desolate father and mother, tries to relieve their anxiety.

A squadron of airships has made a raid over the English coasts. One of these aerial monsters was destroyed, its crew perishing in the fall.

There has been in London, at Covent Garden Opera House, an enormous meeting in favour of air reprisals against the Germans.

The Lord Mayor proposed a resolution:

"That the Government should organize immediately a campaign of air raids against German towns, so that the civil population should learn by experience the meaning of such warfare, and exact from their Government the cessation of such savage and useless crimes."

This resolution was carried with unanimous acclamation.

Tuesday: 19*th.*

My cousin, the Marquise de Casteja, and her young son arrived here today to see husband and father, but, as these domestic visits are severely frowned upon by the authorities, the visit could not last longer than two days. I took my guests to see one of the theatrical matinées at the headquarters of the 25th Division. There was an absurd little carriage in the piece drawn by a tiny donkey. I took a photo of the conqueror of Messines, General Bainbridge, in this new car of victory!

[1] Eugène, Count de Chaumont-Quitry, my second brother.

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MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GUY BAINBRIDGE (COMMANDING THE 25TH DIVISION) AFTER THE BATTLE OF MESSINES, 7TH JUNE, 1917

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Friday: 22nd.

It is raining again after a long drought; a great relief to the farmers, who have long been crying out for rain. It's an ill-wind that blows no man any good! The soldiers only ask for dry weather when they are attacking.

The Italian Bersaglieri have distinguished themselves on the Isonzo front. In four days they have taken the Monte-Santo and driven back the Austrians several kilometres.

Monday: 25th.

I do not hear often from Amaury, but I understand that his work is overwhelmingly heavy.

I hear that he made a sensational speech at a banquet before 800 engineers.

He ended by such a trumpet call of eloquence, so rousing, that all the audience rose, and, cheering France, swore to make a superhuman effort. All industries are working to full capacity, and public opinion is becoming enthusiastic.

Amaury is dealing every day with the Chief of the Air Service, General Squire, who, talking casually one day, told how, when he was attached to the British front in 1914-1915, he had passed a night at the General Headquarters of General Allenby at La Motte au Bois, and had been invited to dinner by a "charming Baroness."

He said that he remembered it all very well, as the repast was excellent, and he had signed the visitors' book. What a curious coincidence!

Amaury is suffering from the intense heat, which is exhausting when continuous—it is 80° (Centigrade). There are constant thunder storms, and he puts in a word of excuse for a "scribble" in the writing of one of his letters—the result of a thunder bolt, which fell within a few yards of the house. Are the "shells" of the Almighty even more startling, then, than those of the Germans?

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Thursday: 28*th.*

There has just occurred—not a hundred miles from here—a pretty little scandal between a young officer and a lady!

While the officer was visiting the lady, three comrades, slightly "elevated," stationed themselves outside, demanding the "mamazelle."

The Don Juan came out furiously to quieten them, was received with blows, and had to retire with black eyes—one of the brothers-in-arms being a champion boxer!

It seems a pity that a Boche shell did not fall somewhere near at the time—just to distract them.

At any rate, the story would not, perhaps, have been the staple subject of conversation for so long!

JULY, 1917

Sunday: 1*st.*

The papers announce the landing in France of the first American troops.

All the authorities—naval, military, and civil—received them on disembarking at a port which is not mentioned.

These landing operations are under the supervision of Commodore Backer, American Naval Attaché in France.

The bands play the American National Anthem and the "Marseillaise," and the crews cheer, being answered by the frenzied applause of the great crowds at the port.

General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the American forces fighting in France, has also arrived.

He left the same evening for Paris.

Hip, hip, hurrah!

Monday: 2*nd.*

From all the opinions I can gather it seems that the final crushing of Germany can only be done by aerial warfare—a supreme effort will be necessary. All the

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English Army Chiefs agree that it is only by preventing the German aeroplanes from crossing our lines during the preparations for attack, that we shall obtain—with the minimum loss—the possibility of driving them back as we are doing at present. If we rule the air, the ground is reconquered almost without effort; if they are masters of the air, the field is strewn with our dead and wounded and always threatened.

Union and understanding between artillery and air force signallers need to be perfect.

A flying sentry is necessary for each battery to indicate the length of range, while ten patrols should be flying ahead to prevent the Germans from venturing forth.

This would allow observation to be made in perfect calm—and very necessary to accurate observation this tranquillity is!

I am dreaming of Amaury bringing the great birds from the United States, coming like flocks of starlings!

Yesterday we had a charming luncheon at a headquarters not far from the Ypres salient. I cannot describe it as being exactly peaceful. One big shell did startle us a little at dessert, but, all the same, one feels it is the death-rattle of the enemy.

Tuesday: 3rd.

It was at this luncheon that I made my first attempt in English at a *jeu de mots*, or pun, and I am very proud of it.

The General having asked me if I knew why the Australians' big hats are turned up on one side, I said, "No," and asked for the explanation. A young officer named "Churnside" was instructed to demonstrate it, and, approaching me, he placed his cheek against mine with the extreme deference due to his great respectability and respect for me. With dignity I remarked that "the hat was not turned up on one side, but on Churn's side," and promptly received an ovation.

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Saturday: 7th.

Emily announces the coming of provisions and clothes for the Auxiliary Hospital at Hazebrouck. She is doing very good work in America.

Later, 2 a.m.

There is a tiresome Boche night bird circling overhead, so I have risen from my bed to write to Amaury, as a proof that my hand does not tremble too much, even under this threat.

It would not tremble at all if I did not think of those three little beings[1] who are sleeping so soundly and whom I don't want to awaken by taking them down to the cellars.

England, too, is receiving constant visits from enemy aircraft.

On the 4th July, during a raid, there were 47 victims, 11 killed and 36 wounded. But, returning from this raid, the aggressors were attacked by British hydroplanes, which brought down two of the raiders.

Sunday: 8th.

On the 4th the troops that took Messines were relieved for rest, and the Staff of the 22nd Division went back to Bailleul. The King and the Prince of Wales have been there, and, as usual, the enemy knew of the visit, but fortunately were not accurately informed of the dates. After the Royal personages had gone on the night of the 6th-7th, 100 bombs were dropped on the town! Some of the victims were in the hospitals near the station; two bombs fell on the transport lines and killed some twenty horses and mules. The bombardment then became so terrific that the Staff moved to Flêtre.

One day while resting the 25th Division gave some sports, and I was invited. At tea I had beside me a Portuguese General. When making his adieux he kissed my hand, saying with the high-flown courtesy of the South: "Madame, I put my heart at your feet!" And then I heard a very Anglo-Saxon General murmuring

[1] Amicie de La Grange and Olivier and Jacques de Bondy.

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in my ear: "You know, my dear lady, I put mine in a better place!"

We have had enemy aeroplanes over us all night.

These birds of ill-omen, after having got rid of one cargo, went off to load up another and returned, thus continuing all night. I think I must remove the children to a safer shelter.

Under this great prominent roof they are always in danger, and I never get a moment's peace.

Tuesday: 10*th.*

I am writing to Amaury to tell him to describe to all his audiences with what impatience we await the air fleet they are building.

Here the Germans drop their bombs from a height of only 300 metres, the observers peppering with their machine-guns the unfortunate civilians running through the streets seeking shelters.

Those who are exposed every day to these massacres call distractedly upon the great friendly nation in whom we have faith. In all the towns around us here we meet, every day, poor civilians—old men, women and children —who have lost a leg or an arm. It is horrible. These unfortunates seek to withdraw a little farther behind the front. But will they find security there?

Saturday: 14*th.*

The day celebrating our National Fête was marked by great success in the U.S.A.

The Bill authorizing an expenditure of 650,000,000 dollars (three milliards of francs) was voted unanimously by the Senate and Congress.

Everyone is much preoccupied with the question of transport, which complicates matters for the air force.

Sunday: 15*th.*

The papers say that the finest troops in the world defiled before the President of the Republic, and the people of Paris, trembling with enthusiasm, watched

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our heroic soldiers and the glorious colours which for three years have faced the German cannon. This year the Fête of the 14th July was one of standards and of flags.

Some of them are but remnants of glorious rags—blue, white, red, torn by shells and bullets and their silk blown to threads by the wind of battle.

And these ragged flags were cheered by a serious and enthusiastic crowd, which saw in them the symbol of the country bleeding, but always brave and collected.

The Fête Nationale this year has truly been the celebration of all France.

Monday: 16*th.*

As the air raids have been getting much worse since the 18th, I decided to send little Amicie and her old nurse to join her cousins at the Villa Arlequin at Hardelot, which Emilie has taken for her children.

The Germans rarely attack a building housing a General Staff, but still, spare bombs are always likely to be got rid of, and sometimes the enemy cunningly flies so low over the houses that the Allied anti-aircraft gunners dare not fire for fear of damaging the houses themselves. The 18th was a bad day for Hazebrouck. A big raid occurred between four and five in the morning—6 bombs! And 45 more fell on the following night.

Tuesday: 17*th.*

The villa for the children is at Hardelot, among the pine woods. I intend spending three days a week there and four here. Our villa is beside that belonging to Constance de Lubersac, so there will be someone to keep an eye on things.

Wednesday: 18*th.*

I hear that the British Army has made a concentration on the Ypres side, and the 3rd Army, which has passed from the command of General Allenby to that of General Byng, has had to extend its front along the old sector of the 4th Army. All this change was effected to replace the 2nd Army, which, commanded

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by General Plumer, has left for Italy in order to collaborate with French contingents in helping the Italian Army.

The old sector of the 2nd Army is in the north reinforced by a French contingent commanded by General Anthoine, and the 4th Army (General Rawlinson) returned to the old French sector near the sea.

The Belgians are holding the front between the 4th British Army and the troops of General Anthoine.

Saturday: 21*st.*

It was a shock to me to learn that Lieutenant Michael Allenby was killed on the day before yesterday. He was an only child and joined up at the age of eighteen; although he had ample opportunity to serve on one of the Staffs, he declined, and was killed fighting bravely with his battery in the lonely sand dunes near Furnes. I heard he had been buried in the sands behind Coxyde, so this afternoon I went over to see his grave. I feel a little anxious lest the sands should drift over and cover these graves. I must go and see it a little later and see if anything can be done.

In spite of his extreme youth, Michael Allenby was a real hero. He had won the Military Cross. On one occasion, when he was reconnoitring in No Man's Land, he saw, lying on the ground, an English colonel, who signalled feebly to him for help. Without hesitation and at immense personal risk Michael Allenby and a comrade managed to reach the badly wounded man and carry him to safety.

I must write to General Allenby, who is so far away in Palestine.

AUGUST, 1917

Thursday: 2*nd.*

I have been in Paris, and returned here the day before yesterday. Yesterday we had a terrifying experience. About seven this evening there was a stupendous explosion, the prelude to a heavy bombardment of 880 shells!

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It lasted an hour, getting nearer and nearer the centre of Hazebrouck, the first shells having fallen slightly short. Nothing fell very near us out here, but we felt the shock severely—windows broke and things fell off the shelves.

One shell fell on the Chasse Factory—but just after 200 workmen had left it! I went into Hazebrouck to see what damage had been done. Considering how terrible the noise was and the size of the shells, there is very little, and not very many people are hurt. Directly the surrounding population realized what was happening there was a wild flight again—a repetition of the early days of the war. Every sort of vehicle was pressed into service, all hurrying to the north-west, while from the south the wretched populations of Armentières, La Gorgue, Pont de Nieppe filed past, bearing all the possessions they could carry. What added peculiar horror this time was that many were walking with their eyes bandaged, having been blinded by the gas attack at Armentières. This gas produces terrible burns of a special nature, and, singularly enough, has a sweet smell, something like honeysuckle, so that at first people do not realize they are inhaling death.

Louis writes from Sebourg (his letter has come through refugees) that his health is breaking down under the strain of his cruel position.

He begs his family to try to get him released. Everything possible is being done through the King of Spain and the Holy Father, but it is feared that nothing will be achieved.

The truth is, Louis is a precious hostage for the enemy.

Renauld has sent a long letter to his father. He is in the officers' camp at Carlsruhe. His most serious wound in the arm is healing perfectly.

The German officer who sent the news was a young man whom he had known at Bonn, where Renauld had once been sent to learn German.

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Friday: 3rd.

M. Painlevé, Minister for War, has sent the following telegram to Lord Derby at the British War office:

"The splendid advance in the North of your soldiers and their French brothers-in-arms has aroused enthusiasm throughout France.

The heroism of your troops is administering some of the severest blows that the German armies have suffered since the outbreak of war.

I wish to express our most ardent wishes for the continuation of your brilliant success."

Sir Douglas Haig has in his turn sent the warmest congratulations to General Pétain.

Saturday: 4th.

The United States have sent an important contract to the French factories. Amaury must be delighted.

We are having constant air raids here, some of the bombs falling much too near the château. I am thankful the children are not here.

I have just had an interesting letter from Amaury, in which he sums up the state of affairs there.

The U.S.A. is not bellicose and the war is not really popular, but the powers that be, under the vigorous leadership of President Wilson, are deeply engaged.

He says that we in France can have no idea of Wilson's power.

"He is mulish in his obstinacy and an idealist."

Never will he make peace with a Hohenzollern. The Kaiser made a bad mistake when he alienated Wilson.

One will wear down the other!

The Germans are employing liquid flame gas. This abomination should be suppressed by the laws of war. But Germany violates all laws!

Sunday: 5th.

All this week has been one of memories.

For the fourth time have the seasons come round again to this sinister month of August—sinister for ever

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in one's thoughts as being the one chosen by Death to begin to reap its great human harvest.

Once more we seem to have lived through that last agonizing week of July, which was preparing the irreparable—that dawn of August which breaks once more upon our blood-drenched land.

May God grant that no fifth year may come upon a France still bleeding.

Monday: 6th.

I was over again to see Michael Allenby's grave. I was guided through the labyrinth-like dunes until I arrived at the little wooden cross placed on the grave which was already half buried by drifts of sand. The grave of a German close by was nearly lost, and I felt that if the war lasted much longer it might be impossible to find Michael Allenby's grave. So I went over to the headquarters of M. de Broqueville,[1] whom I had met on several occasions. He received me in his office, and when he heard my request he telephoned immediate orders to have men sent to do what I wished. So back I went, and, accompanied by three soldiers, we went to clear the ground. But the men themselves said it was a vain labour unless some barricade were put up against the drifting sand. It would be as bad as ever, they remarked, after the first storm. So we procured from the nearest village one of those long poles used for archery in the country. We planted this by the grave, and then made a regular barricade with anything we could lay hands on—bits of wood, branches, etc., especially on the western side, from which the prevailing winds blow.

I shall come over again from time to time to see that the men are keeping it in order.

Friday: 10th.

The papers speak of a Conference which took place the day before yesterday in London and ended yesterday.

[1] Belgian Minister for War.

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France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia were represented.

Agreement between all was perfect, we are assured, and the members of the different Governments are unanimous in thinking that it is important that there should be a frequent interchange of views upon the conduct of the war.

Wednesday: 15*th.*

In fine weather one of the favourite pastimes is boating on the canal. Someone had a brain-wave for developing the imagination of the soldiers—a competition for making boats out of jam-tins. If a single nail is used the boat is disqualified. Yesterday the boats became so full of water that a considerable amount of skill was required to bale out the water with one hand and to row with the other. The audience from the bank shouted out: "That's the Dieppe-Newhaven steamer!"

Friday: 17*th.*

Another competition is fishing. Today seventy Tommies and two poilus solemnly sat around the piece of water, which has been divided into sections, and all day long, from seven o'clock this morning till seven o'clock this evening, except for lunch and tea, the competitors, their eyes fixed on their floating corks, sat and watched for the slightest movement. Just now they handed in the result to the judges who are there to distribute the prizes. The result is that one of the poilus caught two small perch about two inches long, and the rest of the competitors are empty-handed.

"Vive la France!"

Monday: 20*th.*

The British Admiralty announce that several light patrol craft in the Bay of Heligoland sighted on the 16th of August a German torpedo boat destroyer which they chased and attacked. Mine sweepers too were seen.

A heavy fire was opened against them.

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The *Daily Mail* says that this little naval battle hardly lasted ten minutes.

Tuesday: 21*st.*

I have been called to Paris and am staying with Eugène at Neuilly. It is really better when I do leave the front that I should be able to sleep quietly.

Neuilly is less affected by aeroplane attacks than the centre of Paris, so it is really a delightful rest.

Saturday: 25*th.*

The papers for some days past have been describing a new battle of Verdun.

The Army is showing itself at once both heroic and patient.

It has taken Hill 304, which served as an observation post for the enemy from which it could direct its fire. This taking of Hill 304 was perfectly timed, as the striking success which followed has proved—a proof also of the capacity of the general command.

For the Germans, the loss of Hill 304 is very serious, though they are trying to minimize its importance.

But, all the same, the *Lokal Anzeiger* writes: "No doubt the results of the Battle of Verdun will have a favourable repercussion on the prestige that the French Army enjoys in its own country."

Following this success, the President of the Republic and the Minister of War have gone to Verdun, where they decorated General Pétain with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour.

Friday: 31*st.*

I have had a letter from Théophile (our old gardener) telling me that there has been an alarming aeroplane raid, and that a bomb fell near the great oak-tree in the forest.

If this centuries-old tree survives the war there should be put upon it an inscription more glorious than the very amorous ones which are carved on the old trunk!

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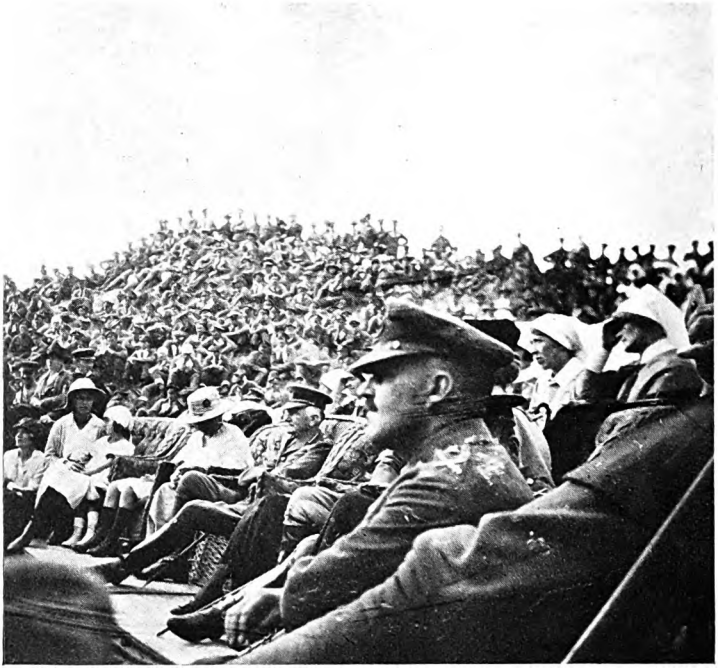

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR A. RUSSELL (COMMANDING THE NEW ZEALAND DIVISION) AND THE PRINCESS MARIE JOSÈ OF BELGIUM, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1917

The General sitting in the middle of the front row is General Sir Arthur Sloggett.

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SEPTEMBER, 1917

Monday: 3rd.

I am returning by way of Hardelot, to the great joy of the children. They are looking splendid. Little Amicie shows signs of strong character. She has passionate fits of temper, when she twists and writhes in her cradle like an acrobat. After five minutes of this performance, indignant at the small effect she has produced, she talks to herself.

We do not understand her language, but one can guess her remarks are not complimentary to us. But when the hour for soup arrives, all anger has magically disappeared.

Tuesday: 4th.

I came back this way on purpose to be present at a grand entertainment given by the N.Z. Division Pierrots, the "Kiwis," in an improvised theatre on the sand dunes at Hardelot. The little Princess Marie José, daughter of the King of the Belgians, was there, and my little grandsons were very excited at the prospect of something so new to them as a pierrot show. We lunched at my niece de Lubersac's, my brother and I, Countess de Polignac, General Russell, Countess Gabriel de Mun, Princess de Croÿ, and General and Mme. de Trantignan. At the play were General Slogget, chief of the English Medical Service, General Godley, General Longmore, General de MacMahon and his wife, and Countess de Miribel, his daughter. Really, it might have been a first night in London or Paris!

The audience was grouped picturesquely in the amphitheatre of a natural forum—made by wind and tempest—boxes, balcony, and stalls were all there! And a warm sun instead of central heating!

The Kiwis danced and sang and the "Prima Donna" made a charming "lady"!

Wednesday: 5th.

Hazebrouck has followed the example of the other towns, and when I passed through it, it was like a dead

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city—all shops and houses closed, no traffic—the only movement to be seen was at the station, where a few belated fugitives were leaving by train.

I stopped en route to see General Russell,[1] and found with him Sir J. W. MacKenzie, the High Commissioner, and was delighted to get a snapshot of him with a New Zealand military band which was playing on the lawn. It seems so strange to find a band from the Antipodes playing in the midst of the countryside where I have lived so many years!

Thursday: 6th.

The Germans are growing more bitter in their attacks on England. Three nights running they made attempts, and on Tuesday evening succeeded in getting through to London. There were a good many machines, it seems, and many bombs were dropped. Chatham appears to have suffered most.

One bomb fell on barracks, killing and wounding many soldiers; it is said 107 people were killed and 86 wounded.

Friday: 7th.

Today is being celebrated at Fère-Champenoise as the anniversary of the Battle of the Marne. Many of our soldiers are buried in the cemetery there, and the Government has chosen the locality to commemorate the great battle which stopped the advance of the German armies. I went yesterday to see the ruins of Hazebrouck again, and it is not very cheering.

A big gun at Festubert rains shells whenever it can. It has no interest in firing on us, as, of course, the Boche knows we are no longer interesting.

I am not a personage of sufficient importance to be honoured by a 380!

A letter from Louis, written from Sebourg, is in quite a different tone from the last one received a month ago. He says he will hold out till the end, which shows he is in better spirits. He says he has been suffering from intestinal trouble lately, but is now better.

[1] Major-General Sir A. H. Russell.

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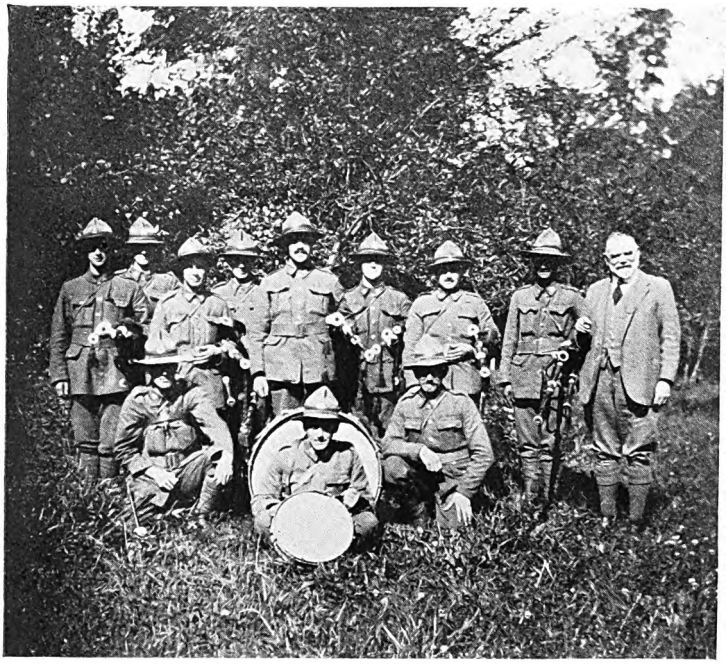

SIR H. MACKENZIE, HIGH COMMISSIONER, AND NEW ZEALAND BAND, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 1917

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Sunday: 9th.

I am writing to General Allenby to ask him whether he would like the body of his son to be removed to our family vault till the end of the war. After a lot of difficulty I have at last obtained permission for this removal from all the competent authorities except the British, whose orders on this subject are very strict. However, they gave me to understand that they would turn a blind eye to what I was doing.

Wednesday: 12th.

Yesterday, my last journey to Paris was a tiring one. Felix and I decided (to save time, as we were going on business) to take the first sleeping car that had been put on again on the Ligne du Nord.

One had to reckon six to ten hours, according to the frequency of air raids. On this journey of ours we had three of them.

We got to Abbeville about midnight, already in that state of strain when one's backbone—moral as well as physical—seems bent double! Felix had gallantly given me the lower berth in our little cabin, and his tremendous voice now and then rang out of the darkness (lighted only by the busy searchlights outside) as he said: "Frightened, Clé?" "A little," I replied, "but I'm safer here in the cellar than you up there in the garret!" "What a goose you are, little sister!" he said, and his hearty old poilu's laugh was comforting.

I am glad to get these little holidays in Paris sometimes to see my sister, and my brother, who gives all his time to the Red Cross in Paris. My poor sister is greatly to be pitied, being in a state of continual anxiety about her three sons, and with the charge of a sick and neurasthenic husband. The lovely Château de Maucreux (Aisne) is in danger, too, and is an additional worry for her.

Poor Hazebrouck has suffered again more severely.

On the 9th August fifty bombs were dropped, and this was followed by a heavy bombardment of the 380's. On the 10th they had two hours of it incessantly, and in the afternoon the prison came crashing down with

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a fearful noise! The prisoners were fraternizing in the cellars with the warders, and no attempts were made to get away! In such a case discretion is certainly the better part of valour! On the 1st the attacks were renewed, and the wily "Boche," guessing by this time that the town must be pretty well empty, attacked the villages near—St. Sylvestre (Cappel), Ebblinghem, Renescure. The English ambulances and hospitals retreated gradually, that at Hazebrouck just getting away in time to avoid catastrophe.

Then the aeroplanes got to work, and on the 19th August and again yesterday demolished a good many houses, including the county police station. The "Boches" seem to have a "down" on the police as they had already got the prison!

Thursday: 13*th.*

I am back in Paris and will return to the Nord with the young Countess de Mun, née Gontaut, who is coming to spend a few days in the sector where her husband is. I am delighted.

I have seen Odette,[1] who has had a slight operation, and whom I find very much changed.

I invited to dinner together for some useful conversation Colonel Bellaigue, Chief of the French Mission to the British Army, and Commandant Tulasne. They got on very well, and I think this meeting may have excellent results. The new Soldiers' and Sailors' Club, just opened in the Place de la République, has been visited by the Prince of Wales on his way back from the front.

He went through the different rooms, and visited the big gallery, where 200 men on leave were gathered together.

The young heir to the English throne was heartily cheered.

Thursday: 20*th.*

I was told a charming story today about General

[1] My sister, Marquise de Lubersac.

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Plumer, commanding the Second Army. He had the touching idea of sending to the King of the Belgians the church bell of Wytschate as a souvenir of the Battle of Messines.

Saturday: 22nd.

A letter from Amaury from Buffalo.

He says that he is seeing the same things after a lapse of three months, and finds them multiplied tenfold! Acres of ground are now covered with masses of machinery, which will soon be turning out rows of aeroplanes. The hardest moment is over—now we may expect results.

Before an audience of 3,000 people Amaury was able to arouse frantic cheering and enthusiasm for France. Emily, for her part, is showing lantern slides of the devastated regions in order to collect funds, and is doing marvels.

I am at Hardelot for a few days.

Amicie can say distinctly, "Papa and Mama," now. The ladies say to each other: "Come and see the lovely baby on the beach."

Every morning she plays on my bed with a rattle, an old pill-box, the lid of an old saucepan, and a rosary!

It is all one—sacred or profane—to her.

When I need a complete rest I come here.

Sunday: 23rd.

The British front is getting very lively again. Their armies have taken the offensive anew, yesterday morning, the 22nd, on a front which extends from Armentières to St. Julien. The territory of these operations is of capital importance as it includes the famous crest of Passchendaele, which is the tactical and strategical key to the whole region.

Results of yesterday's fighting are an important success.

The British took 3,000 prisoners, so this battle, described as the "new Battle of Flanders," has begun well.

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Tuesday: 25th.

Colonel de Bellaigue, Chief of the French Mission attached to the British Army, who always understands how much I desire to promote good feeling between the two Armies, sent the following certificate to the French H.Q. to enable me to buy more petrol for my car.

22nd September, 1917.

"On leaving the French Military Mission to the British Army I certify that the Baronne de La Grange has never failed since the beginning of the war to render every possible service by her efforts to promote cordial relations between the British and French Armies and the civil authorities. Never considering herself, she has moved about everywhere and assembled together at her own house the people who desired to meet, and contributed largely to the general good relationship."

Colonel de Bellaigue is very highly thought of by Field-Marshal Haig. Proof of this was given him the other day. He had gone to see the Field-Marshal on some military affair, and was asked by him to review a regiment of French Canadians, who had distinguished themselves in battle. This delicate attention on the part of Field-Marshal Haig would not surprise those who know him; but to the French it reveals the fine and noble character of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army.

Thursday: 27th.

I am still feeling rather shaken after my latest adventure. I have had the Countess Gabriel de Mun staying here, and as I was driving with her to Hazebrouck Station, just as we were turning the sharp corner by the canal, a ·380 shell fell in a farmyard about sixty metres distant from us. An immense spray of black smoke, earth, and brickdust shot into the air and fell back on us like heavy rain. Fernand, the chauffeur, stopped dead, turned, and went full speed in the direction from which we had come. The postman, whom we had passed but a minute before, had disappeared into

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a cellar. He therefore did not see us pass again, and told the inhabitants of La Motte that we had certainly been killed. The first shock over, I regained my calm and told Fernand to drive on, as we must not let my companion miss her train. But he replied that, having lost half of one hand at Verdun, he did not feel inclined to lose the other. And I could not persuade him to go to Hazebrouck, except by making a long détour.

Coming home, I stopped, out of curiosity, to see how much damage had been done. The shell, by an extraordinary piece of luck, had fallen on a manure heap, with the result that its explosion was harmless, but unpleasant. It gave the farmer and his family, who were sitting close by having their lunch, a nasty shock, but no real harm was done.

Friday: 28th.

There is an epidemic among the pigs. We think it comes from New Zealand. One farmer has lost ten.

The owners of the café here at La Motte have lost sixteen of their relations, who were all killed in the cellar of a house at Calais by a bomb.

Sunday: 30th.

The King of Italy has just returned M. Poincaré's visit to the Italian Army by one to the French Army. He began first with the battalions in reconquered Alsace; then he visited Verdun, Champagne, and the Soissons front.

At Chantilly he said good-bye to the President of the Republic to go on to visit the Belgian front and King Albert.

When he finished his French visit he sent a very friendly telegram to the President, full of confidence in a glorious future made possible by the heroism and bravery of our soldiers.

Some of my best British friends are in action just now, and I am following them in my thoughts.

Every communiqué confirms the confidence I have always had in them.

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Their tenacity and sang-froid are admirable. They are worthy of their brothers, the poilus.

Dunkirk is under land fire from huge cannon, sea fire from submarines, and air attack from aeroplanes. All these are now competing with each other in ferocity. I thank God my dear children are in America just now.

OCTOBER, 1917

Thursday: 4th.

The Bishop of London has addressed a message "to the people of London," in which he speaks with scorn of the barbarous German deeds. "Let us be proud," he says, "of the danger we run, a danger not the thousandth part so great as that to which fathers and brothers are exposed in the trenches every hour of day and night. If we are amongst those struck by an enemy bomb, we die for our country as much as those of our people over there."

The Battle of Flanders has begun again.

The *Daily News* says that, on account of not only its strategic significance but its material results, the victory to the east of Ypres is clearly one of the most complete and decisive events of the war.

Sunday: 7th.

Amaury sends me the prediction of a monk who lived in 1700, announcing that the war will be over by Christmas. I am beginning to wonder if he got his Christmas rightly placed. It is a good while ago!

What is more likely to be true than the prophecy is that Amaury, to my great joy, is returning to France. I shall be able to give them back their little Amicie full of health and vigour.

Monday: 8th.

Amicie has five teeth. She is full of fun and tricks, and her firm, pink chubbiness is the envy of those who admire a vigorous type of beauty.

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She claps her hands and waves farewell with greater effusion than he who can say: "How do you do." She has a glorious time every night in her bath surrounded by "flocks" of celluloid ducks and fishes!

We are having most awful weather!

It is very unfortunate: Flanders is one great slough of mud. . . .

I have General Birdwood's daughter staying here at La Motte au Bois for three days. She is very like her father.

Yesterday we went to Souverain-Moulin to see the d'Hinnisdal and we spent a delightful day.

Tonight we are having a concert here.

Madame de Polignac, who has a very pretty voice, is going to sing.

I have heard from the War Office that Amaury has been officially promoted Captain.

Sunday: 21*st.*

Amaury tells me that on receipt of a telegram I sent him announcing his sister's departure for America he took all precautions and made all arrangements for her comfort during her stay.

Commandant Tulasne is quite willing for Amaury and General Foulois (with whom he has been working for six months) to return here. He is soon to take command of all the U.S.A. squadrons in France; and has asked for Amaury on his staff. So Amaury is coming back to France at once, and Emily about the 7th or 8th December.

Amaury tells me that General Foulois wants to visit the whole front when he arrives, and that while they are inspecting the British front they will make La Motte au Bois their H.Q.

Monday: 22*nd.*

Yesterday's communiqué announces that three Zeppelins have been brought down in the East. We know to-day that these Zeppelins were returning from a raid on England, in which they made eighty victims!

Two different parts of London were bombed, and

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material damage done to private property and buildings.

Wednesday: 24th.

The victory of the Chemin des Dames is becoming more and more apparent.

Eight thousand prisoners have already passed through the little room where they are identified and searched. The plateau of Malmaison, which we have taken, gives us an outlook towards the west of the Chemin des Dames which is of great importance. Our English friends are rejoicing with us over this success, and the *Morning Post* writes: "The victories of France are ours—as our victories are those of France."

NOVEMBER, 1917

Friday: 2nd.

France does not forget her dead, and today she has wept for those fallen too soon to have known victory.

Everywhere the crowds are enormous.

We pray for those who have passed on, and think, alas! of those whom this implacable war will claim before the end.

Tuesday: 6th.

The *Temps* publishes some of the secret telegrams sent by ex-Queen Sophie of Greece to her brother, the Emperor William. There is no doubt that the Greek Queen betrayed her country and was entirely absorbed by the idea of serving her native Germany.

Certain of these telegrams sent via Berne are most suggestive.

It seems 800 were exchanged in all, but only 60 of them have been found.

Thursday: 15th.

In Russia things are going badly. As telegraphic communications have been destroyed, the news that

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comes through is incomplete and confused. The revolutionaries are growing violent, and Kerensky is trying to withstand them.

There appears to have been fighting at Tsarkoié-Selo. My nephew in Russia must have plenty to do just now to throw his enemies off his track.

Friday: 16*th.*

Mr. Lloyd George made an important speech on Wednesday in the House of Commons, as Mr. Asquith had inquired what would be the attributes and functions of the Allied War Council that it is proposed to create. He read the articles of the agreement between the British, French, and Italian Governments.

All the English papers, which comment at length on this speech, are of the opinion that it will tend to calm the agitation going on in certain political circles, and that there is no disagreement among members of the Cabinet.

Sunday: 18*th.*

Public opinion has called Clémenceau to power, and he has formed his Ministry in twenty-four hours, in spite of the ostracism of the Radical-Socialists and the Socialist vote.

France believes in him and awaits his acts.

Sunday: 25*th.*

The English have just had a success to the west of Cambrai. Their tanks have done marvels.

Mr. Philip Gibbs, war correspondent on the British front, telegraphed from General Headquarters in France: "Behind the tanks marched the British infantry, cheering, while thousands of shells fell upon the Hindenburg Line."

When at dawn the tanks advanced, with their battle standards flying, their Commander marched at their head like a king in olden times. The tanks, too, had their battle-cry.

Just before the attack along their lines ran the message, Nelson's signal at Trafalgar, slightly changed: "England expects every tank to do its duty!"

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M. Poincaré has telegraphed congratulations to King George on the British victories.

DECEMBER, 1917

Saturday: 8*th.*

Several squadrons of aeroplanes—twenty-five, it is said—attacked England on Thursday morning.

Some of them succeeded in flying over London; there were outbreaks of fire. The anti-aircraft guns brought down two, and their crews were made prisoners.

Wednesday: 12*th*

The *Temps* publishes a communication from Mr. Bonar Law announcing that General Allenby has taken Jerusalem. He proposes to enter it officially tomorrow, accompanied by the commanders of the French and Italian contingents. The taking of Jerusalem is a brilliant feat after the crossing of the Sinai Desert.

This bold manœuvre just executed by General Allenby, and crowned with success, is a *chef d'œuvre* of military stratagem. The taking of Jerusalem marks the end of the Palestine campaign, its objective having now been obtained.

The King has sent his congratulations to General Allenby. In London there is very great enthusiasm. When the news was known, a service was immediately celebrated in Westminster Abbey, and another religious service will be held in St. Paul's Cathedral.

I had just reached Paris on the day when in all the churches of France a Te Deum was to be sung. So the first thing I did was to hurry to Notre Dame to hear the glorious psalm echoing along its Gothic arches, hoping so much for that other Te Deum we all long for—the one which will celebrate the end of the war!

It was intensely cold and snowing hard. When I got to the door and saw the surging crowds I was afraid, and almost gave up the idea of getting in, when I suddenly noticed to the left, by the staircase that leads to the towers, a jolly looking sacristan of aspect so

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"sympathique," with his long beard and debonair expression, that I decided to go to him and explain that the great conqueror of Jerusalem was a friend of mine and had even been my guest for nine months in Flanders. It was quite a special case, I urged—couldn't he get me in somehow? Although obviously predisposed in my favour, the sacristan remarked that the police had a wary eye on everyone, and that I had not the special entrance card exacted for this hidden doorway. Following the sacristan's counsel, I went to the policeman with the same story, adding that my case was really so special that it could not create a precedent.

The policeman replied with dignity and some cynicism that he was like "Doubting Thomas" and "only believed what he saw"! I thought my case was lost when I had a sudden inspiration and showed him my travelling permit for the British war zone, bearing on it the magic square stamp. The effect was instantaneous. The policeman bowed low, and with a very Marseillaise accent exclaimed: "The devil! The General Army Staff! That means something! With that you can go anywhere." And hailing a colleague, deeper in the crowd, he bawled in a stentorian voice: "Let madame through. She's the 'bonne amie' of the General who took Jerusalem!"

And so from one to another, from sacristan to sacristan, beadle to beadle, and even from "suisse" to "suisse," preceding me in the great crowd as I passed through, always with the same explanation, till I reached the seats reserved for the mighty!

If my reputation suffered a little my place was perfect, and, having a clear conscience, I did not worry about any possible misconceptions on the part of my neighbours!

Really, I don't believe General Allenby had half so much trouble getting into Jerusalem as I had into Notre Dame! What with beadles and sacristans and policemen! But, of course, he had a few disagreements with the Turks!

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Friday: 14*th.*

The *Journal* gives the first details on the entry of General Allenby into Jerusalem.

The Sheik of the Mosque of Omar and the Patriarchs of the Roman and Orthodox Churches united to welcome the General.

A Proclamation was addressed to the population, declaring that the army brought them security and liberty. The English papers give long articles on this event.

The 18th December was a terrible day for Hazebrouck. A shell on the presbytery of St. Eloi. The priest, the assistant priest, and a country curé who happened to be there, were all buried in the ruins, and were dead when brought out. The poor curé had come into Hazebrouck bringing his parishioners' contributions to the National War Loan, which, in banknotes, were found in his pockets. Many other people were hurt and forty more houses ruined.

Wednesday: 19*th.*

I read in the *Journal* today the text of the Armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk on the 15th December between Russian, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Bulgarian Plenipotentiaries.

There are 11 articles, and the Armistice is to last from the 17th December at midday till 14th January at midday.

It is concluded as a preliminary to a durable and honourable peace for all parties.

Friday: 21*st.*

One of our cruisers, the *Châteaurenault*, being used as transport in the Mediterranean, has been torpedoed by a submarine and sank on the 14th December. All troops were saved, but ten sailors were lost.

German aircraft are still busy over England, having crossed the coasts of Essex and Kent, some even getting over London.

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Thursday: 27th.

The British Sovereigns have sent Christmas messages to their Army and Navy. One of these messages is to this effect:

"At this Christmas season our thoughts are with the wounded sailors and soldiers.

"We know from personal experience with what patience and good humour they bear their sufferings. We wish to all a speedy return to good health, a peaceful Christmas, and better days."

Saturday: 29th.

The end of this year is marked by a separation, as Emilie, after a bad attack of influenza, has gone to recuperate at Saranac Lake in America. It is a wise decision, as our own towns in the Alps and Pyrenees are crowded out with refugees, and I know, having spent three years in America, how healthy the American resorts are in winter, with their brilliant sun, crisp air, and hard frozen snow. On the 20th I went to Bordeaux to arrange everything for her comfortable departure, and on the 25th Emilie left by the Messageries Maritimes boat. The children have been left with an old governess, Mlle. Chauvette, the most devoted of women, and I need not worry about them.

The Anzac Army has distinguished itself magnificently this year, especially in August, September, and October. Near Villers Bretonneux the troops (31st Battery) were forty consecutive days in the trenches! They were expecting relief when, hearing that an English battalion early in the war had held on for forty-eight days, they decided to beat this record, and remained another thirty days at the front!

The sector of Armentières will long be remembered in connection with these fine troops. Amentières, Ypres, Kemmel, Flanders, Somme, and Picardy! Those who, like myself, saw near at hand the gallantry of the soldiers of the Empire and the Dominions, bow their heads before the troops along that front!

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JANUARY, 1918

Tuesday: 1*st.*

Paris.—I am here at my children's flat (95, Rue de l'Université), exactly opposite the Foreign Office. What mysteries reign over the way! The gods there live enshrouded in a sort of cloud—for the outside world, at least! Perhaps it is just as well!

New Year's Day! The old year dies, the new is born, but events seem the same. How many sad hearts there are without the happy family gatherings of old days! So many will never have them again. We wait and long for peace. There was once a Hundred Years' War, but then there were no 880 shells, nor gas; only lances and rapiers and the not-so-very-deadly balls of the old muskets.

Even here in Paris I keep in touch with the British Army. I lunched today with General Russell (N.Z. Division). He is looking for a suitable chaperone for his daughter, as he wants to leave her for a few months in France. After a good many inquiries and a longish excursion, we chose the Pension San Carlos at Auteuil.

Wednesday: 2*nd.*

The Kings of Italy and Belgium have sent New Year's greetings to M. Poincaré. Mr. Lloyd George has sent a long telegram to M. Clémenceau, in which he speaks highly of the courage of the French Army and Navy.

He ends with these words:

"No words can really express what we owe to the armies which are fighting and suffering to that end that those behind the lines may enjoy Peace and Liberty. We can only thank them from the bottom of our hearts—firmly convinced that the New Year will see the fruit of their sacrifices—that is, the victory of Liberty."

A new German aeroplane, the Gotha—which has nothing to do with the almanack—has flown over Paris.

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What charming New Year gift is destined for us? They say that the machine is very perfect, which is a hopeful outlook for those who await a visit.

Thursday: 3rd.

The papers publish the order of the day from General Pétain to the troops on the 1st January.

It is short, but very French!

"1918 is beginning. The struggle must go on. The fate of France exacts it. Be patient—be tenacious."

The General ends the despatch thus:

"I salute our flags, and while sending the most affectionate wishes for 1918, I express once more my pride at being your commander and an entire confidence in the future."

Sunday: 6th.

La Motte au Bois.—Considering my "leave" had lasted long enough, I came North yesterday. I dined with my brother at Boulogne, taking him afterwards to see Dr. Almroth Wright—a man for whom I have a great esteem. He is a great *savant*, and an extraordinarily interesting figure. I shall always remember his long thin silhouette at his little house at the port of Boulogne or in the Casino, now a hospital.

Dr. Wright is the discoverer of the vaccine against typhoid fever, and by this has rendered incalculable service to the Expeditionary Forces of Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, and Egypt.

When he invites me to tea in his laboratory, my cup finds itself in company with the many and varied instruments and test-tubes on the table. Those little glass plates, too, on which are the cultures for the infinitely minute organisms which engender such great plagues!

I always have a "creepy" feeling that perhaps some vigorous and agile microbe, crossing the No Man's Land where he is held under observation, may scale the parapet of my cup and seek a refuge in my interior!

Dr. Wright is fond of poetry as well as "germs," and

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devotes himself as easily to the lyre as to the alembic! When I visit him he often asks me to read him something from Musset or Victor Hugo. He finds rest and change from his scientific labours in the imagination of the poets. He is the kindest man imaginable, but get him on to the subject of "Feminism"! The proverbial "red rag to a bull" is nothing to it! For him Woman remains (or ought to remain) where she was in the Middle Ages!

Tuesday: 8th.

I went to Mass very early this morning and came on here directly, finding the officers of the Rest-house awaiting me to make the inventory, as they are leaving.

The temperature is polar at present! I went from room to room in those draughts so beloved of our British allies! Result: I feel ill and foresee influenza!

Friday: 11th.

I *have* got influenza; the first time I have been ill since 1914, when I had slight jaundice, to which I never confessed. I felt unwell, too, after the gas attack in 1915. The poisonous clouds drifted over from the directions of Ypres, following the course of the canal. It gave us all symptoms of sea-sickness, and that at a distance of 35 kilometres, too! What must it have been for the sufferers close by!

An English hospital ship was torpedoed and sunk in the Bristol Channel on the 4th January, about midnight.

Fortunately they were able to save the wounded on board, transferring them to patrol boats.

There were three victims. The English Press is very indignant at this outrage on the *Rewa*, which had 550 people on board and was brilliantly lighted up. There was no panic on the ship. With splendid discipline officers and men went to the posts assigned them.

The solicitude shown for the wounded was remarkable, but many were suffering terribly, and they only reached port eight hours later.

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Saturday: 12*th.*

A charming letter from General Allenby, in which he thanks me for taking care of his son's grave. Speaking of the campaign, he says:

"My men have fought and marched brilliantly; and have beaten the Turks soundly. The crowning victory at Jerusalem has filled them with self-confidence; and the thanks and appreciation of you and all our friends has given us the greatest delight."

Monday: 14*th.*

My guests of the Rest-house have gone, and since then I have only thought of nursing my cold. The house is empty and silent. I have been wondering if I shall have time to get it cleaned before new occupants arrive. Orderlies used to wave brooms and brushes, and flap dusters ostentatiously at rare intervals, but I (watching cynically) never saw much difference! They were all apparently of the same school as the old bachelor who "cleaned up" once a week and swept all the dirt neatly into a little hillock under the hearth-rug!

Yesterday (13th) when General Godley phoned to know if I could see him, I felt well enough to say "Yes." He is at l'Abeele (on the road to Ypres), and tells me that he has handed over the command of the 2nd Anzacs to General Monash, an Australian, and that he (Godley) has taken command of the 22nd Corps. He is looking for an emblem for his "standard." I suggested the two "cocottes," the name my brothers had for the number 22 in the game of "Loto." ("Cocottes" is the word used, especially by French children, as the term for little chickens, like "chickies" in English. It has also another meaning!)

The General, being very respectable, preferred the emblem of the dog ("Tou-tou") 22, as being more correct!

The house has been empty for a week now, and though I have never had to complain of my guests, I am glad to have a little solitude and rest.

General Godley, when he came today, introduced General du Cane, the future occupant of the château.

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He is the 15th Corps commander. Evidently I am not destined to be solitary very long.

Tuesday: 15*th.*

There has been a heavy snowstorm raging. I think of the thousands of men crouching in the threatening horizon, yet always liable to sudden attack.

I was sitting here quietly when suddenly I heard steps in the vestibule. It turned out to be nothing more alarming that General Birdwood and his A.D.C. come to ask for dinner. Three covers were quickly laid! "Birdie," too, is giving up his command of the Division of Australian troops to Monash—a little wistfully, I think, as he loves these men devotedly. But orders are orders, and he speaks highly of Monash.

Wednesday: 16*th.*

Today Major Macpherson came to make an inventory of the furniture, etc., of the château for the 15th Corps, and I reviewed my belongings. I really think that if the war goes on much longer I had better make a 99 years' lease with the British Army!

Friday: 18*th.*

An old friend, Major Churchill (Jack or John, as the case may be), came and gave me a surprise visit!

Saturday: 19*th.*

Today I made the acquaintance of General Sir John Monash. He seems worthy to command these fine Dominion troops.

Sunday: 20*th.*

As a Sunday rest the Countess Van den Steen came to spend the day here. She seems tired. Her hospital at Poperinghe is always full, and if she were not so ably seconded by Madame Terlinden, she could hardly carry on.

When these two ladies want funds they address themselves to America, and a delegation—generally feminine

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—is despatched from there to give an account of things over here to their committee.

So my dear little friend comes for me to take charge of the delegation at an agreeable moment—that is, when a bombardment is in full swing! At Poperinghe the usual luncheon in the cellar is arranged, with sand-bags all round and gas masks ready to hand!

The Countess Van den Steen says, however, that she will not apply to me again, as I appear to act as a sort of mascot—I drive away bad luck at once. In other words, directly I turn up the bombardment stops as if by magic, to the frightful disappointment of the delegation, who are thus unable to write to their friends on the committee: "My dears, we had a glorious bombardment!"

I am, therefore, according to the needs of the moment, a curse or a mascot to the cause.

The poor delegates, returning without being able to describe the difference between the explosion of a 380 shell and a champagne cork, are quite discredited, and the hospital loses funds it badly needs! In war, as in peace, charity has its little weaknesses to which one must turn a blind eye!

But decidedly I must keep away in future and give the delegation a chance!

Thursday: 24th.

The papers give a description of the naval battle at the Dardanelles, when the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* were sunk.

The *Breslau* was hit first.

After two or three explosions she sank. On perceiving this, the *Goeben* turned and tried to escape to the south, but, striking a mine, made for the shore and was wrecked.

Sunday: 27th.

Today I received the Marquis de Vaufreland and the Marquis de Jaucourt for lunch, and this evening I have had Generals Birdwood and de Lotbinière to dinner, besides Major Churchill. My *cordon bleu* attracts

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visitors, and I always have a few extra covers laid for unexpected guests.

Wednesday: 30th.

My new Staff is complete: Generals Sir John du Cane, Frith Singer and Kirwan, Colonel Shelley, Captain Ponsonby (A.D.C.), Major Scott, Major Gore Browne, Captain the Hon. R. A. Blyth, etc.

As I like to know the men France sends to our allies, I also invited Lieutenant de Lassailly, liaison officer to the 15th Corps.

Thursday: 31st.

During the evening of Monday, 28th January, the Germans made a double raid on London.

Unfortunately there were a good many victims—47 killed and 169 wounded. The first attack was barely over when a second squadron of enemy planes crossed the Essex coast and met the British defending aeroplanes, which brought down one enemy machine, which fell in flames from a very great height.

Nevertheless, we are shown no greater favour in France; yesterday Paris received 295 projectiles, and 326 were dropped in the suburbs.

FEBRUARY, 1918

Friday: 1st.

It seems that the Gothas were over Paris at 11.30 last night. The inhabitants were warned by the ominous screams of the sirens to take cover.

The German, always a poor psychologist, thinks he is going to terrorize Paris!

It has had the opposite effect, and only hardened the determination of the city to continue the struggle till a French, and not a German, peace is attained.

Sunday: 3rd.

The Government is busy taking precautions against the possibility of further visits from the Gothas.

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The "Metro" stations are to be left open, in case of sudden alarms, as they offer safe shelter.

The regulations about the lighting of the city are to be made more stringent, so as to give the enemy no possible help.

Yesterday I lunched at the Château de Flêtre (home of General Birdwood's Staff), an old fortress that once housed General Hunter-Weston. It is considered a very enviable billet, for they say that wherever General Hunter-Weston has been will be found the maximum of comfort obtainable in war-time!

Wednesday: 6th.

General Horne, commanding the 1st Army, came to see me the day before yesterday. Today General du Cane gave a luncheon-party in honour of the Australian Artillery, and he asked me to arrange the table decorations.

My grandfather, Colonel in the Artillery under the First Empire, was the only one to bring back a cannon from the Russian campaign, and he transported it with immense difficulty. In recognition of this, Napoleon I. gave an order to the Polytechnic School to present Colonel de La Grange with two miniature cannons. They now decorate my library.

I do not think I showed a want of tact in using these two cannons, of a hundred years ago, to decorate the table for the British Artillery. In any case, they were a great success. I covered them with all the flowers that I could find, and by way of thanks I was invited to partake of the lunch of the Anzac Artillery officers, who gave me as neighbour at the table a superb Maori major from the Island of Raratonga.

Thursday: 7th.

The Government has just awarded a medal expressing the gratitude of France to the Queen of the Belgians. The Queen has made acknowledgment by telegraphing thus: "I shall be happy to wear this symbol, in which I see the sympathy of the great nation for which I feel so much attachment and admiration."

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Saturday: 9th.

The young officers of the Staff have built huts in the park among the trees to escape enemy observers, who are flying over us incessantly. Last night I received a pressing invitation to dine with them at their mess: Majors Gore Browne and Scott, Captains Ward Usher, Glyn, and King.

It was bright moonlight, and as I arrived at the mess the young officers said jokingly: "You know, madame, when you accept an invitation like this in Paris, it is called 'faire la bombe.'"

I replied severely that we left that to the Boches, "Spree" being so handy for Berlin! And, anyhow, grandmothers didn't—or shouldn't—indulge in that form of amusement!

Sunday: 10th.

A transport bringing American troops has been torpedoed at sea some miles off the coast of Ireland.

It is the first American troopship to be sunk. This loss has caused considerable feeling in America, but, as the *Evening Sun* writes:

"This misfortune which has fallen upon us will not make us falter! It will only stiffen our courage and resolution to impose a just retribution on the enemy of civilization and to make the world a place fit for peaceful peoples to live in peace."

Wednesday: 13th.

I have now received the reply from General Allenby. He writes:

"I am deeply grateful to you, my dear friend, for your kind and sympathetic offer to receive Michael's body into your family vault. However, my wife and I would both wish that he should rest in the grave at Coxyde. She is as sensible of your kindness as I am, and thanks you with all her heart. I know you will understand, and that you will not think us ungrateful; but we should like his body to lie where it was placed by his friends and brother officers, close to the battle-

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field where he met his death. Your offer has greatly touched me, and I shall always remember, with gratitude and affection, this token of your friendship for me and mine."

I have nothing but admiration for these sentiments, which are those of a true soldier, and I am sure Michael Allenby himself would have shared them.

Tuesday: 19*th.*

On the 17th I received for dinner the Countess Van den Steen, General Horne, General Birdwood, General du Cane, Lieutenant-General C. W. Jacob, Major-General A. H. Russell, Major-General C. B. White, Brigadier-General A. S. Knox, Brigadier-General Kirwan, Major-General A. G. Mercer, Brigadier-General S. H. Wilson, General Singer, and Prince de Croÿ.

Yesterday I lunched at Poperinghe at the hospital with Countess Van den Steen. We had tea with General Jacob at the Château Lovie, and I stopped to see General Godley at l'Abeele on my way back. General Godley brought an American colonel to see me today.

During the last fortnight the British have brought down 104 enemy aeroplanes—a record!

MARCH, 1918

Friday: 1*st.*

Everything as usual and relatively quiet. My daughter-in-law writes to ask me to join her, if possible, at Wimereux. Felix has transferred his household gods there, as the staff has had to leave Boulogne on account of the bombardments.

Emily wants me to get a friend of hers out of a scrape—an American who had been taking photos near Roye and Thilleloy, where he is installing tractors, offered by American subscribers with the object of beginning the recultivation of the devastated country as soon as possible.

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The present Intelligence Officer with the 5th Army is Captain Waldenström, who was once my guest with the Cavalry Corps.

Another British hospital ship sunk in the Bristol Channel.

This happened at dawn, after a violent explosion; the ship sank in seven minutes. Luckily there was time to get out the lifeboats.

Saturday: 2nd.

Details have come to hand of the torpedoing of the hospital ship, and it is now known that 153 souls are missing.

Some survivors were saved by a little French trawler, with a crew of four men and a cabin-boy, whose conduct was very brave in view of the danger caused by the heavy weather. The survivors desire to recognize the fine behaviour of the French ship, and the Board of Trade have been informed of the circumstances.

Sunday: 3rd.

I had Captain Cutlack, of the Australian Press, to lunch today, and to tea the Staff of the 15th Corps. At dinner were General Birdwood and Lord Hamilton of Dalzell. This afternoon I told General du Cane of my idea of seeing Captain Waldenström about Emily's American, and said that, as I should already be halfway, I should probably go on to Paris.

General du Cane seems very confident in the strength of the line everywhere. When, in his office, he showed me the map which indicates the placing of the Allied troops, I remarked bluntly that I wondered at the position given to certain troops opposite Armentières!

He, of course, must affect to have equal trust in all, but, personally, I like to depend on the two I know—my poilus and my Tommies! I have seen them at work and close to, and I can sleep in my bed when I know they are between me and the Boche.

I am leaving tomorrow, having wired to my daughter-in-law and Felix to meet me at Amiens.

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Wednesday: 6th.

General Allenby has sent me a cutting from an English newspaper, together with the text of his despatch on the campaign which ended in the capture of Jerusalem. "Lately," he says in his letter, "we have pushed down into the Jordan valley, and have taken Jericho and reached the Dead Sea. The Turks have sunk most of the boats which used to carry corn and other supplies on the Dead Sea; but we hope to be able to restore traffic on it soon. Jericho is a miserable and unhealthy village. The surrounding country is fertile and should be covered with crops, but it has been neglected and allowed to go out of cultivation. There are very few inhabitants, as the valley is too hot to live in during the summer."

Monday: 11th.

The German air raids continue. London was visited on Thursday, Paris on Saturday.

Several squadrons arranged to cross our lines, and flew over the capital. The papers speak of ten or twelve squadrons.

Happily results are not in proportion to the apparent importance of the attack, and the Parisians followed official instructions for public safety with the greatest sang-froid. It is said that in the theatres performances continued without interruption, the audiences showing complete indifference to danger.

The 5th and 6th we spent rushing about trying to find Captain Waldenström (a Dane, by the way). We went to Roye and then Montdidier; no luck either time, but at last at Nesle we caught him. He promised to send the precious confiscated camera to us in Paris without taking out the photographs of the tractors—stimulants of American generosity to our poor ruined peasants.

Going back to Amiens, we saw the Château de Thilleloy; it belongs to the Hinnisdals. What a ruin! It was such a pretty house, too! Fifteenth century and beautifully arranged!

In the park is a sixteenth-century church, with a

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Renaissance façade. Its wide tower, pierced by a flamboyant rose window, was flanked by two round towers with steep pointed roofs—of the "pepper-box" variety.

The glass was sixteenth century, too. There were rose windows, old, finely carved armorial bearings, and the tombs of the Soyécourt family (sixteenth century) filling the nave. Everything is ruined: glass broken, window spaces enlarged by shells, and the towers fallen!

Well, I am getting used to ruins, but the sight of these upset me. I have a sort of relationship with them, and feel as if I had been at a family funeral!

Felix has kindly asked me again to stay in our old family house in Paris (18 Boulevard des Invalides). I shall consider this idea, since it means being nearer my children than in the Rue Charles Lamoureux.

On the 9th I dined with Amaury, and some Italians, the Caraciolo. There are a great many enemy aeroplanes about. When we left Amaury's house it was pitch dark, and headlights are, of course, forbidden. We nearly missed the turning by the bridge, broke a lamp, and finally plunged into the fountain in the Place de la Concorde!

At last, after many difficulties and not without emotion (which we all carefully concealed, affecting to be amused), we managed to escape the falling bombs, and, safe and sound, each guest was dropped at his own door.

If I were an Allied airman I would go and prevent Gretchen dining out, and make Madame Fritz go down quickly to the cellars in her good town of Berlin!

Tuesday: 12*th.*

18 *Boulevard des Invalides.*—I installed myself in this old house (so full of memories for me) yesterday. I seem to see my grandmother (née Bourbon Condé), second wife of my grandfather, after the war of 1870. My two children were born here in 1886 and 1888. The very walls seem to speak to me of the happenings of forty years!

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My welcome back has been strictly in keeping with the times!

Two air bombs were dropped near the Rue Las Cases. I hear they are trying to get the War Office!

Thursday: 14*th.*

The English have returned the German calls by a little visit to Coblenz, where they dropped over 500 bombs at different strategic points. Activity is very great everywhere, the fine weather helping the good work.

Friday: 22*nd.*

A big German attack is expected. One feels that the enemy is making methodical preparations.

Aeroplanes were over London during Monday night, and there were, unfortunately, only too many victims: 87 killed and 161 wounded.

The King and the Queen visited the affected districts.

Sunday: 24*th.*

This morning an old friend of my childhood, the Count de Saint-Quentin, came to see me, and while we talked we heard three explosions over Paris; one seemed quite near the house.

It seemed impossible that an air raid could take place over us like that in the brilliant sunshine!

Saint-Quentin didn't believe me when I told him I could easily distinguish now by the sound between the explosion of a shell and an air bomb. These were shells, I felt sure.

Three shocks followed at regular intervals, then silence!

Well, my old friend left me, saying that his electors in Calvados wouldn't believe in shells over Paris any more than he did!

But to-night the papers leave no room for doubt that an enormous cannon has been turned on Paris, and probably we shall hear it again.

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The Parisians call the gun "Big Bertha," after the female owner of Krupp's works.

Tuesday: 26th.

There has been the third bombardment of Paris today. I feel inclined to go back to the front. It seems so much safer there.

I had hardly thought this when I got a letter from old Theophile, telling me that an anti-aircraft shell had gone through the roof of the château and been picked up in the sewing-room, which luckily was empty. There is evidently no safe place north of the Loire. One goes on living. Parisians show great good temper under bombardments. Last night was troubled again, and this morning there were big "booms" at intervals of seven to eight minutes.

Yesterday twenty-seven shells fell. It is supposed to be nearing the end, but we do not yet know where this monster gun is placed. Let us hope we are likely to learn it soon.

Easter Sunday: 31st.

The bombardment continued throughout Friday, and all Paris is excited and indignant because of this abominable deed on the part of the Germans.

Women and children praying in a church on Friday in commemoration of the death of the Saviour were in cowardly fashion assassinated by order of William II.

The Germans in their papers had said "Easter would be a bloody one"—an execrable prophecy, savagely realized!

It was about 8 p.m., when worshippers were crowded in the church of St. Gervais, that shells began to fall upon its old walls, burying in the ruins women, young girls, and little children.

The victims, alas! are numerous.

All Paris with one voice is protesting against this monstrous attack, which will rouse the indignation of the world.

The Germans have made these last few days, usually

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consecrated to piety, consolation, and hope, a time of carnage, desolation, and death.

APRIL, 1918

Monday: 1*st.*

My long stay so far to the rear makes me feel a little ashamed of myself. I feel like a deserter or an *embusqué*. I must think seriously of getting back to my post in spite of the severity of all orders, since the big attacks began against Amiens.

The "gods" on the Supreme Council at Versailles, many of whom are my friends, will, I think, help me to get home. I only hope things will not have become more serious in my absence.

General Foch has been nominated Generalissimo on the Western front. The British and American Press confirm the fact that, in view of the present state of affairs, the highest command has been given to General Foch so that entire co-ordination of the Allied troops on the Western front may be obtained.

Tuesday: 2*nd.*

The papers announce that King George has been in France visiting his soldiers.

He goes amongst them, talking familiarly and offering them cigarettes.

This direct contact with his brave Tommies led to some amusing incidents. The paper tells one story of a Colonial soldier, slightly wounded, who was in a hospital train.

Learning the name of the personage inquiring with so much interest about his health, he addressed him thus:

"Well, I've heard tell of you for a long time. I'm glad to see you. Shake hands!"

Which the King did, smiling.

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Wednesday: 3rd.

I received today a letter from General Allenby, on the envelope of which is stamped: "R.E. Postal Sect., London, N.W. 1. Damaged by immersion in sea water through Enemy Action." What adventures letters are subjected to these days!

He says he is making progress east of the Jordan, and that on the day of writing they had captured four guns and some machine-guns, also fifty Boches, including three officers. "There are not many Boches here," he adds, "but some have been arriving lately. The Turks do not like them much."

Wednesday: 10th.

The first week of this month passed so "stodgily" that I had nothing to note.

I want to get back! They are talking of a big German attack on the Armentières front. This is exactly what I pointed out might happen in that conversation I had with General du Cane before leaving La Motte au Bois! I came away feeling worried to think of that part of the line denuded of French and British troops!

So I have been off again to try and get hold of the Supreme Council after it had had its lunch!

I was received and reassured with kind words; in fact, the usual administration of opium to the unfortunate civilian!

General Sackville-West, General Knox, and Captain Cazalet all insist that my alarm is unnecessary, but I am pretty sure of my information—namely, that the line has been broken, and on that very spot that I had indicated on the map!

I have sent a few words to my gardener to give him directions as to how to act should the situation become still worse, and I trust my friends of the Council to get my letter through.

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Saturday: 18*th.*

Today, my birthday, I was invited to lunch at Versailles by Brigadier-General Sir Hereward Wake with Colonel Ollivant, Lord Charles Bentinck, Captains Benny and Rose and Lieutenant Dick.

All these officers are kindness itself, but I wonder if they are not trying to quiet my anxiety because they want to prevent my return to the North! They must know more than most people or they would hardly consider it worth while to be called the "Supreme Council!"

One may well say the Germans lack psychological insight. On Good Friday they murdered many of the faithful assembled in a church to pray! And then yesterday their death-bringing shells rained upon a maternity home and crèche, killing young mothers and their babies a few days old!

One may quote the Gospel words and call it "a massacre of the Innocents." What a tragic picture it calls up of those poor, terrified young creatures trying to fly with their babes in their weakness!

Tuesday: 16*th.*

I have been to lunch with Amaury, who is on leave. He had just had a telegram from the Countess Van den Steen, reading thus: "Château pillaged. Your safe in danger. Have notified police."

He broke the news to me, too, that Bailleul fell into the hands of the Germans on the night of the 14th-15th, and the enemy seems to be drifting in the direction of Hazebrouck! Really I feel a sense of complete despair to think that, after having stayed more than four years in my often-threatened home, now when I want so passionately to get back I am prevented by the rising wave of the enemy, which seems suddenly to be overwhelming us!

I think of all the villagers and the neighbouring farm people, accustomed to come and ask advice at the château before almost every action of their lives. I remember the touching confidence shown in 1914

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when they used to come and look up at the windows of our house. Seeing them open and unshuttered, they would go away saying: "Madame is still here. We can stay!"

I have always thought with terror of the possible evacuation of my village should I not be there to direct matters, governed by my affection for the good people and my authority over those who might give orders.

And just what I dreaded has happened!

If it be true that the enemy is going in the direction of Hazebrouck from Bailleul, why, good heavens, La Motte au Bois is already invaded! And yet from Ypres the news is not bad—800 prisoners taken and a big movement towards the north.

Wednesday: 17*th.*

Amaury is getting a car from the American aviation authorities to take him to La Motte au Bois, to which, as a soldier, he can get more easily than I can. The car is promised for tomorrow.

Thursday: 18*th.*

Amaury has asked me for the key of the safe, and I have explained the secret of the opening. He has promised to tell me on his return if he thinks I ought to go myself.

Tonight I received this letter from General de Lisle, commanding 15th Corps:

Madame, you have no doubt realized that La Motte is now under shell fire, and on my arrival here I found that the house had been evacuated. The Boches have not reached the woods near Les Lauriers, but are within a few hundred metres of it.

Last night my A.D.C., Count O'Gorman, took a lorry to save the best of your beautiful things, and I enclose his list of what he brought back. He went voluntarily and took the greatest care of the two model guns presented by Napoleon. The choice of things is his, but as I know he is a collector of *objets d'art* I thought he was the most suitable person to go. Many of the pictures were damaged in transit. Count O'Gorman could

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not find the gardener, and was told he had left; I find it difficult to express my feelings at the loss of your beautiful things.

Sincerely yours,
BEAUVOIR DE LISLE
(*Formerly 1st Cavalry Division*).

The days are passing. I am frantic with anxiety. I have begged my friends on the Council to let me go to La Motte au Bois by air. All my requests fall on deaf ears.

Saturday: 20th.

For four weeks now Germany has been bringing her whole might and strength to bear upon the British front. By the violence of her attacks one may gauge the importance she attaches to gaining her objective. The British are worthy of the trial they are enduring.

Lord Milner, who has just been nominated War Secretary, has made a statement to the *Temps*, in which he declares (alluding to the General Command given to Foch) that he congratulates himself on the organization of this command and believes that never before in history has an alliance been carried out with such loyal devotion, and he ends by saying:

"The hour has struck now for us to be more united than ever. We are. We shall remain so.

"It is not in vain that we have shared as brothers the same anxieties—even the same joys. The days that we have lived through together have created for us imperishable ties."

Tuesday: 23rd.

Amaury has telegraphed that he found Theophile evacuated to a farm near Morbecque. Amaury has directed him to try to get into the château at night and save anything possible by bringing it bit by bit down to the ground floor. From there he may be able to get it taken away to safety.

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Wednesday: 24th.

Amaury has come back as his leave is up. He asks me to try and go (by whatever means I can find) to La Motte au Bois, as he did not succeed in opening the safe in spite of my very clear directions.

He wants me to ask for a safe conduct to enable me to get to Wardrecque, to which place the Staff of the 15th Corps withdrew when they had to leave La Motte au Bois.

Thursday: 25th.

All today I have spent in trying to get a permit. At last I have it and intend to leave tomorrow.

We are all lost in admiration at the magnificent heroism of the British Naval Volunteers on board the *Vindictive*. With the one idea of blocking the canal at the German naval base from Zeebrugge to Bruges, the *Vindictive* was to be sunk in the outer port at the moment that her crew jumped on to the quay. This amazing feat of arms resulted in the death of many of the heroes, whilst others have been horribly mutilated. It seems almost superhuman thus calmly to risk one's life, knowing the small chance there is of surviving such an enterprise.

Saturday: 27th.

Yesterday I was made a proud grandmother once more, for Anne Odette, Amaury's second daughter and second "war baby" was born. This news was brought to me at Boulogne-sur-Mer, my first stopping place before rejoining the Staff of the 15th Corps at Wardrecque, near St. Omer. It will be very difficult to pass along those closely guarded routes, but as I have all the safe conducts imaginable I expect to arrive at my destination some time tomorrow.

Monday: 29th.

On the 28th, however, without any very great difficulty I got from Calais to Boulogne, St. Omer, and Wardrecque, where I found the Staff of General de

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Lisle, who succeeded General du Cane as Commander of the 15th Corps, General du Cane going to G.H.Q.

I saw Captain O'Gorman, who told me there is now a military guard at the château, which should prevent any further pillaging. This was done directly after the precipitate retreat of the Staff, when the house was left empty. I asked him to let the lorries bringing up shells to the batteries and returning, in the ordinary way, empty to continue to transport my furniture. He informed me of the complete evacuation of La Motte au Bois, and says there is not a soul in the place except the British gunners who are hidden in various parts of the park. He added that those of my belongings which have already been saved are lying in a shed, where they can't remain! I must bestir myself and get them moved as quickly as possible.

I put my sole hope in the St. Martins, as they live so near, and I went and begged for the loan of a big garret or an outhouse. They most kindly put at my disposal the garrets of the Château de La Cressonière, some hundreds of yards from them. I got hold of a Belgian, who had been gassed, but was well able to pack my things, as he is a carpenter by trade.

I am now preoccupied with the problem of what on earth to do with all my stuff eventually. It can't stay indefinitely in other people's attics!

I decided to have everything packed, as thus it won't take up quite so much room. On the 1st May I got a packer, a specialist from Calais, to help the Belgian, who is, after all, not an expert.

MAY, 1918

Friday: 10*th.*

Mr. Lloyd George lately summed up the present military situation thus: "The Germans have rendered at least two services to the Allied cause: they have hastened the arrival of the American troops, and they have caused the plan of a united command to become a reality."

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And this is true; in any case, and in spite of the future violent attacks they will certainly have to face, the armies are ready to continue the struggle with the same confidence in the final issue.

Monday: 18*th.*

On Saturday, the 11th, I visited the Belgian crèche that the Countess Van den Steen has withdrawn to Bouvelinghem. An English car took me to dine with General de Lisle's Staff, and then, after much persuasion and "wangling," I got permission to go to La Motte au Bois to open my safe, which may be in danger of being "burgled" in an abandoned house only two miles from the enemy's lines!

Although I got permission to go, I was seriously dismayed at the conditions attached to it. General de Lisle absolutely refused to let me go unless he accompanied me. I felt it was an awful responsibility. What would be my sense of guilt if one of the British Army chiefs were killed indirectly through my fault?

Yesterday morning (Sunday, 12th), a lovely spring day, we left headquarters at nine in the morning. General de Lisle was at my right, and his aide-de-camp sitting alongside the chauffeur.

The car was driven very fast, and after we passed Morbecque the General gave me a gas-mask, having his own in readiness beside him.

We reached the old cobbled forest road and turned abruptly to the right. My heart was beating so fast that I felt half stifled. The gates of the château were broken! The drive was full of shell-holes! The car, to avoid them, had to drive across the lawns, where, heaven knows, there were nearly as many!

The General pointed out to me that the mother swan was sitting on her nest by the lake.

"You will soon have a family of cygnets," he said.

I had a vague feeling that, in the goodness of his heart, he was trying to distract my mind from trouble as if I were a child.

The car stopped under the thick clump of limes to

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the right of the château, by the old wall that divides the kitchen garden from the front part of the park. This and the trees made some sort of cover from the enemy.

The General helped me to alight. There were a few steps to walk, and then I stopped—dazed, before the house.

All the window-panes had been blown out—there was not a door left, and piles of débris of every kind littered the ground of the forecourt.

"Is this my dear, peaceful, old home?" I asked myself.

The guns were booming near—to right and left. It was a quarrel between giants—between Great Britain and Germany—as to who should take or keep these old walls so dear to me, and that I had left to the care of my friends.

The General hastily pushed me into the house, and the A.D.C. followed us.

I went first into the library. Oh! what confusion upon confusion! Everything that could fall or move seemed to have done so, and the daylight was almost shut out by the sand-bags blocking up what had once been windows!

The first thing I mechanically noticed was, in a corner, a little table that had been left to me in her will by a *German* governess! Should I save this German relic from German extermination?

But first it was necessary to see the safe at once. The General gave me two hours to make my choice among all these beloved belongings, which seemed almost to hold out their arms to me—begging to be saved!

General de Lisle went off to visit his batteries.

At the safe the A.D.C. standing by me held his electric lamp up to the level of the lock with a hand that never trembled. I felt as if it were a question of my national honour! Though a woman, I am of France, and must therefore have a hand as steady, and so I fitted the key into the lock! The combination is eight and two nines (8—9—9). I couldn't have

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chosen worse! To count so many times the little notches 8, 9, and 9 without missing one!

The cannonade was now deafening, terrifying (the only good thing being that I am not sufficiently expert to determine by the sound if the shells were those of the enemy arriving or ours departing!).

But, happily for the honour of the French civilian, such as I am, the safe opened as if by magic. I hadn't missed a notch, and heaven be praised it was done.

Papers, jewel-cases, valuables of all sorts, were quickly stuffed into a sack, snatched from the window and emptied of earth. A rough-and-ready packing enough, but Time might be Life!

Before going upstairs I tried to poke in the débris of a gas bomb, with the result that lurking fumes were let loose, and I began to feel ill! I then collected my notes and diaries that I had left there when I went to Paris, and finally went up the first flight of the staircase. My room! It was a sight to break any woman's heart! I looked round and seized the wonderfully modelled and coloured figure in wax of a Mexican Indian on a mustang (made by some gifted if savage artist) that I love because my husband brought it back himself from Mexico. It is in a glass case. The A.D.C. took it from me respectfully. I think this tall fellow was sorry for me. I then made a varied and extraordinary collection of things that it was possible to take away with us in the car, but when I wanted to go up higher in the house, he stopped me. There had just been a tremendous explosion, which seemed to cause him some disquiet. As I was not allowed to go upstairs I decided to go down to the cellars! I thought some of our famous old 1808 brandy might be acceptable to the Staff of the 15th Corps. Alas! I needed no key here! The cellars were open. Keys and my good intentions were alike superfluous! Not a bottle of anything remained. It was good-bye to both old Burgundy and brandy. But on second thoughts I prefer someone this side of the front to have had it rather than the Boche. And they are so near now! Any day they may get in!

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How long I wandered like a somnambulist among the ruins I don't know, but at last I was roused by the voice of General de Lisle trying to make itself heard above the growing din of the guns. He said I must hurry—the game was getting too dangerous!

I let them help me into the car with the extraordinarily varied heap of objects that I had rescued—some piled on my lap, some on the General's knees. The A.D.C. jumped up lightly and the car turned round to return whence we had come.

As we crossed the lawns we saw—oh! piteous sight! —the fair swan lying, beating her white wings in Death's agony!

A shell had struck her mortally as she sat brooding on her nest! A few minutes ago all had been full of the promise of life! Now all was ended!

We passed through the battered gates and out on to the cobbled road, and so through the forest.

Suddenly I looked at the General. He was sitting straight up with the wax Indian in its glass case, carefully balanced between his two hands to save it from possible jolts. He had an air of gentle resignation as he said:

"Madame, if we meet the Commander-in-Chief he will say: 'De Lisle is a lunatic!'"

"If he does," I replied, "I shall say: 'No, he's not. He's a very good fellow.'"

Beyond Morbecque I got them to stop at the farm, which is the refuge of my gardener, and encouraged him to try and save as much more of the furniture as the British lorries will still take away.

The General advised me to look for an abode nearer his Headquarters than the St. Martins, so that I can be on the spot to receive the furniture, which can only be discharged near the munition dumps.

Therefore I have installed myself in a little château belonging to the Countess de La Serre, which is only a few hundred yards from the Headquarters, where I shall go for my meals.

This house stands at the junction of two railway lines, used for the transport of troops and munitions.

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The natural result is that it is an objective for air-raids. The owners have left it, and I can be pretty sure of reigning here "monarch of all I survey." I don't foresee any competition at all in that respect!

The old gardener of the house is the only companion I have, and he has chosen to live in the cellars, seeming much amazed that I should prefer the first floor, where I have the best rooms (with the permission of the lady of the house, who has gone no further than Boulogne).

Tuesday: 14*th.*

Last night was tragic, and no one slept. A squadron of enemy aeroplanes succeeded in getting very low over Wardrecque—with the objective of the British munition dumps! They are heaped up on both sides of the road from St. Omer to Boulogne, and over a distance of several miles!

The sight would have been fairy-like, if it had not been so terrible. What a number of human lives must be cut off by these gigantic fireworks! From my window I could see the incendiary bombs falling from the aeroplanes, then, almost simultaneously, the terrific explosion of thousands of shells, with the sky illuminated as if by Bengal lights! The aeroplane, easily distinguishable and with even the pilot's head visible, would then soar up and fly away to escape the anti-aircraft batteries, which, once warned, came rushing up like fire-engines!

The sides of the road are now simply live furnaces!

About ten o'clock in the morning, after this terrible night, my old gardener came to see me and told me that, in the village where he has taken refuge (Sercus), crowds of distraught Chinese coolies are running loose in all directions, having escaped from the surveillance of their battalion officers, and are imploring shelter.

I have kept my gardener to help me to receive the furniture that the lorries are bringing from La Motte au Bois. The men have only time to dump the various things in the courtyard and return to more strictly military duties.

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A scene, at once comic and touching, has just taken place here. I was in the courtyard of this, my temporary home, when a lorry drove up and stopped.

Alongside the chauffeur sat a Tommy, looking very serious indeed. In his arms he was nursing a mannequin, like a tailor's dummy, dressed as a Red Indian. The costume, an authentic one, had been gained by my husband when gambling with a red-skin chief in Canada.

The splendid eagle's feathers of the head-dress were streaming in the wind as the Tommy, with his treasure still pressed to his heart, got down very carefully, and, placing the dummy before me, said very gravely: "Baroness, I have saved this man because I knew you loved him."

The scene may appear merely funny to anyone who does not realize how affecting it was, too.

These men, the Tommies, are so devoted to me that they are risking their lives to save all the objects which they think are most precious to me.

This is what I remember in that little scene, and the memory will never fade.

Yesterday I lunched with General Vaughan, and dined with General Walker of the 1st Anzacs, the same who once invited me to tea and made me miss a surprise visit of Amaury and the Count de Clermont-Tonnerre, when they came down at La Motte au Bois in their aeroplane! I mess now at the Headquarters regularly.

Wednesday: 15*th.*

The officers tell me that the château is now nearly empty, that everything movable has been taken away, and that I need not expect to see any more lorries.

I have counted fifty-three in all, and it has been an excellent "flitting," except that in one load some family pictures were rather too near neighbours of the antlers of stags and the horns of bison!

The eye of a grandmother was put out and the comfortable waistcoat region of a grandfather had a hole in it!

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But, apart from this, I can give a good and grateful reference to the Tommies as "furniture removers"!

A few pieces of furniture are still here in an outhouse of my refuge, the little Château de Racquinghem. Countess de La Serre offers to lend me her gardener's house for my gardener and his wife, as her gardener is now living in the château. I have accepted, and sent a car for Théophile telling him to come at once. He arrived soon afterwards, with the very small amount of his belongings he had been able to save.

It is only today that he has had sufficient command of his feelings to describe the events at La Motte au Bois since I left and the evacuation. Hitherto the poor old man has always broken down when he tried to tell me.

"On the 9th of April," he said, "shells began to fall on the village, but the Staff was still at the château. There was great activity among the troops."

During the night of the 10th and 11th, the military police attached to the 15th Corps went to the village and gave orders for immediate evacuation. Théophile, at the château, was in ignorance of this order, and it was only next morning when his wife Marie went as usual to get bread at the village baker's that she discovered that the houses were empty. She went back, and she and her husband spent that day between their cellar and their kitchen. The bombardment was getting louder and nearer. There were British soldiers camped in the park, and Théophile dared not go up to the château to see if the Staff had gone.

In the evening the village priest, evacuated the night before, returned to try to save some of the sacred vessels. He saw Théophile and begged him to leave. As there happened to be a British lorry on the "Place," they got away to Morbecque, where they spent the day in a house whose owners were just leaving.

But Théophile, who has the characteristic devotion of an old servant, tried on the 18th to get back. In the little alley of thick limes, which, with the bridge across the canal, led from the château to the church, he found the dead bodies of six English soldiers. A sheet had been thrown over them, as there had been no time for

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burial. In the stable yard, a little nearer the house, he found the decapitated body of another, with the head lying a dozen yards beyond.

With horror or terror in his soul and the sound of the bombardment booming again on all sides, the poor old man left this scene of tragedy and returned to Morbecque.

I know what he must have suffered at having to leave to devastation the place he has looked after for forty years with so much devotion. He has seen in my grandchildren the fourth generation of his master's family, and we consider him as one of our own.

Having found lodging at a farm at Sercus he got a permit for the château,.and, at the risk of his life, went back—through the woods this time—and brought down to the ground floor all the old furniture for which, during forty years, he had always been responsible when acting as caretaker in our absence.

The lorries brought some of this furniture in his "packings," which, though summary, are marvellous—pillows and cushions acting as shields for porcelain and suchlike. In this way I have got my old set of Tournai china almost intact.

Finding the road along the canal, by the hamlet of Le Parc, less exposed than the Morbecque road, he went that way, and counted thirty British guns firing towards Merville, besides those in the park of the château turned in the direction of Vieux Berquin. He tells me, too, that the Assistant-Mayor was badly wounded in front of his farm at Préavin (a hamlet less than a mile from La Motte au Bois) and that he died afterwards in the hospital of Aire-sur-la-Lys. Twelve of our villagers from roundabout were killed in this bombardment.

The enemy have got just halfway between Merville and Préavin (two or three miles from La Motte au Bois) and as far as the edge of the forest on the road to Vieux Berquin. Will this be their final advance? They want to get Hazebrouck and Dunkirk.

But the Tommies are there—I am full of confidence, only grieving over the sacrifice of life that there must be to deliver us!

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I feel now that as no more furniture is coming, there is no use in prolonging my stay here at Racquinghem. I must not abuse the kindness of my friends on the Staff, so I am giving orders for the transport of the last arrivals of furniture and cases.

There is the Bechstein, too—I wonder if it is because it is German that it is so heavy! It is still in the shed awaiting its fate!

I have written to Meyers, the furniture people at Versailles, for their agent's name at Calais. After all that has been done already, we must save it properly by getting it farther to the rear.

General de Lisle and Captain O'Gorman offer to take me as far as St. Martin this evening.

Thursday: 16*th.*

Today I had the reply by telegram about my furniture. I must go to Calais and arrange for its transport and insurance. One doesn't insure for nothing in wartime!

Friday: 17*th.*

My Belgian packer sent off the first lot of furniture today by rail. Five others will follow and be sent to Versailles.

General Allenby writes:

"I think of you every day that this fighting continues, and I fear that La Motte au Bois is in the thick of the battle. I see, by the reports, that the Germans have for some weeks occupied Vieux Berquin and the southern edge of the Forêt de Nieppe; so I fear that there is little chance that your dear old château can have escaped harm. It is horrible to think that ruin should come to your home, and to the garden, park, and woods so beautiful, especially at this time of year. I love it all dearly, and I cannot bear to think that war should touch those peaceful scenes where I have spent so many happy hours."

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Saturday: 18*th.*

The German aeroplanes are flying over us. They are trying to get the munition factories at Audruick, between St. Martin and Calais.

I am thinking dreamily of all the prayers to Heaven prayed by the dowager Madame de St. Martin—a saintly soul, who, she says, prays better and more fervently when terrified by an air raid than under the most devotional conditions. Such prayers must be acceptable to God. It is strange so good a woman should so fear Death.

Thursday: 23*rd.*

I am going to Paris and Versailles to arrange about the storage of my furniture.

Friday: 24*th.*

I have found, near Versailles, a big hall, which in peace-time is a dancing place for wedding parties. In war-time one marries, but afterwards one does not dance. I think my furniture will be safe there until the happy day when we can take it back to La Motte, and put it again in the same place where it used to be before this terrible upset.

Tuesday: 28*th.*

I am back in the Pas de Calais at Bouvelinghem, where the Countess Van den Steen proposes asking Captain Barclay, of the Intelligence Service, to come and see me. He was at La Motte au Bois just after the evacuation of the General Headquarters Staff of the 15th Division, and witnessed the beginning of the pillaging there, which was put a stop to by the British Military authorities, whom he notified at once.

I don't, however, attach very great importance to this matter, inevitable in war-time, however unlucky for the individual.

With the enemy at your very door and likely to cross its threshold at any time, it is not surprising if there is some relaxation of the laws of "meum and tuum"!

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I am indebted to the kindness of Captain Barclay, who uttered the first cry of alarm to prevent my house from meeting a fate as cruel as that to which all deserted homes are exposed in war-time.

The replacing of General du Cane by General Beauvoir de Lisle, to the command of the 15th Corps, would have left the latter in ignorance of the interest that my former guests had taken in La Motte au Bois; but, the attention of the Staff having been drawn to my old walls by Captain Barclay, they are now subject to a special surveillance.

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Sunday: 2nd.

I think I may now say that for me the war is ended—as far as active participation in it goes.

I shall only be recalled after the retreat of the enemy, or abandoned to my unhappy fate should I ever have the grief of seeing that same enemy established more or less in the heart of France. But we will put this horrible possibility out of our thoughts. Do not our allies give every proof of their firm will to keep France intact and even to recover the provinces lost in 1870?

If our French soldiers fall to the last man, Germany will still find, barring her march, their brothers-in-arms.

If I had decided early in the war to enrol myself in the Red Cross my work would, no doubt, have taken me elsewhere, and the fate of La Motte au Bois would not have been linked with mine as it has been. The British Army, finding the château empty, would have passed it from hand to hand, and this billet of our allies would never have become, as it has, a remembrance of that respectful friendship which I have always found in the hearts of all those who were my guests.

I might possibly have been more useful to my country in nursing the wounded, but I believe, nevertheless, that my part has not been quite a useless one in remaining

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among a population which is profoundly attached to me, and which, throughout the hostilities, has had recourse to me for help and counsel in many matters.

I should like to have stayed on, even in the ruins of my old home, until the day of deliverance, but I should only have been an anxiety and trouble for its defenders, and it is because they insisted that I have resigned myself to leaving it altogether.

They have promised that directly the tide turns I shall be recalled. It *can't* be long! Reinforcements are arriving all the time, it seems.

I have reigned there for thirty-four years, and it goes to my heart to hand over the place in ruins to the young people. Yet I can retire happily, knowing that my daughter-in-law takes the same interest in the place as I did and receives it as I did from my parents-in-law. It has always come first with me, in spite of the many vicissitudes of my life.

Already the plans for rebuilding are in existence, and the new house will be far more beautiful architecturally than the old one built by my predecessor, the artillery colonel in the army of the great Napoleon. But the passing of that building (one of several on the thousand-year-old foundations) marks the end of another definite historical period. I must needs remember with regret and affection the old house as it was, and I think that the feeling of my British friends may be the same. Their love of tradition, their sensitiveness to old things and memories, is very pronounced.

There are few Frenchwomen who have had the opportunity of knowing and understanding the remarkable sensibility of the British as I have! Among us they are judged as cold and difficult to move, but this judgment is wrong, and I feel that the friendship, based on the hopes and agonies of the war that we shared in common, will last. It has been through too deep waters to sink now into forgetfulness and oblivion!

But what shall I find left of our dear home? I have had both sad and happy days there. And now the chain is broken! What will remain of those old walls, which nearly every hundred years have been more or

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less destroyed and built up again on their old fortress foundations with so much patriotic faith?

Perhaps I shall have to live in the old cellars of Robert de Frizon, the only part of the building which has defied all invasions and never been destroyed.

It was on Monday, 27th May, that the German offensive began on that part of the front extending from the north of Soissons to the north of Rheims. The papers say the bombardment is terrific, and that there are explosive poisonous and blistering shells.

We must wait for further news, but knowing the energy and discipline of Allied action we can have confidence.

Tuesday: 4th.

The offensive continues. The German plan is becoming evident and the menace to Paris taking shape, but the high command is watching and will be able to throw up a barrier that the enemy cannot cross. The American troops are at Château-Thierry and showing the great quality of coolness under fire.

I am leaving for Versailles, where I shall be near the source of news and able to hear quickly what is happening.

Thursday: 6th.

On Saturday, the 1st June, there opened at the Trianon Palace a great Inter-allied Council, and grave questions must have been discussed. Clémenceau presided.

On Monday I heard something. Our fate is being decided in Picardy, Flanders, and the Chemin des Dames. We are being grievously tried.

Today Lord Charles Bentinck and Colonel Ollivant came to lunch. I did not seek to penetrate professional secrets, but I am convinced that the Supreme Council is no sinecure!

Friday: 7th.

Today I have been in Paris, and found my sister packing the more precious part of her furniture from the Rue

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de Grenelle for despatch to the Château de Lubersac, in the Corrèze.

She says that the Government is considering the question of transporting to the south of the Loire the archives, banks, and munition factories of the Paris region, and she is usually well informed by friends in a position to know.

Saturday: 8th.

Emily has gone to Tours to rejoin Amaury, who is now attached to the American air service in France. He has already done this in America. I am here at Versailles, suffering from my throat and bronchitis. As I found my doctor old-fashioned, I have had an Army surgeon recommended, and he has X-rayed my lungs. He says my present bad state of health comes from my being gassed.

On the wonderful X-ray photograph he has written "Gassed."

It will pass, a little bit of glory for me, to posterity! After all, everyone hasn't had a grandmother who has been gassed!

The treatment is very painful, hot iron cauterizations of nose and throat. It really is, in my case, more glorious to bear the cure than it was to suffer the malady!

I must have got a second whiff of this "Boche perfume" when I poked about in the papers and books in my library the day I went to empty the safe.

Wednesday: 12th.

There is not much hope left for Maucreux, I fear. An old servant from Limousin, called Denis, is in charge.

Guy,[1] who is in the air service, has decided to go by car and try to save miniatures, Sèvres china, and family papers.

The American troops that have gone up the line near Château-Thierry are in liaison with French troops.

[1] Captain Count de Lubersac, my sister's eldest son.

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They say they make good soldiers, but, then, no doubt they wish to pay their tribute to Lafayette.

Thursday: 18*th.*

I have been to get news. Guy is back, and says that, as he was going upstairs in the château, an Italian came running down yelling: "The Germans!" He was not so far wrong, for, on the road back, Guy was greeted by a lively fusillade. Mercifully he was not touched. He could save very little, for military cars are not exactly furniture vans! As for the rest, a fine library of rare books, pictures by Nattier, drawings by Boucher, furniture and tapestry, all those are left to the Grace of God and the not too bright wits of the worthy Denis! Another old family place about to be sacrificed for the homeland!

Wednesday: 19*th.*

The papers speak of the exploits of the tanks. They have again been in action during the last few days of fighting.

It was thanks to them that our infantry have been enabled to enter the village of Belloy without heavy losses.

These machines encircled the village, and all the men in them have been mentioned in despatches by their colonel.

Saturday: 29*th.*

Contradictory rumours are arriving from Russia. Telegrams from Kieff announce that the Tsar has been assassinated, and that the Imperial Family have been moved to Perm. One can only hope this news is false.

JULY, 1918

Monday: 1*st.*

News from the front is coming in rapidly, and every communiqué is awaited with feverish impatience.

The French have counter-attacked successfully, and

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the British have advanced in the Forest of Nieppe. They have made 400 prisoners. It was the Yorkshire Division which brilliantly led this last attack.

Thursday: 4th.

France today celebrated the "Independence Day" of the U.S.A. President Wilson sent a message to American citizens, and there has been a cordial exchange of telegrams between him and the Sovereigns.

Paris wished, on this great day, to remember those who gave independence to the United States—men whose descendants are today fighting with our soldiers to ensure that same independence for ever to France and the world.

Saturday: 6th.

I am going to Touraine, where my daughter-in-law has rented the Château de Jallange.

General Monash writes to say how sorry he is to hear that the enemy reached La Motte—I had written and told him the terrible news. He says:

"In obedience to your request I took our revenge on the Boche. My corps yesterday attacked him, and we took nearly 1,500 prisoners. That will give him something to go on with!

"There is no chance in the world that your friends among the Australians would ever forget you or your graceful and charming hospitality which so many of us enjoyed. I only hope it will be my good fortune to see a great deal more of you before I return to my own country, and that I will have the pleasure of returning to you in that country a small share of the many kindnesses which you have bestowed upon me."

Monday: 15th.

The *Temps* describes how our British and American allies wished to celebrate our National Fête.

In England the touching and magnificent celebration of "France's Day" united all hearts in a loyal brotherhood.

In America, at Washington, the Tricolour floated over

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the Capitol, and the " Star-spangled Banner " replied to our " Marseillaise."

All the rulers sent telegrams to the President of the Republic, full of cordial good wishes and the hope of final victory.

Saturday: 20th.

The *Daily News* writes: " It is not too much to say that yesterday was the best since the great days of 1914, Foch having attained his objective, which was the enemy's communications."

It is certain that, as a result of his brilliant counter-attack, the direction of the battle has been reversed.

Monday: 22nd.

It is unfortunately only too true!

Telegrams today announce a confirmation from several sources of the assassination of the Tsar Nicholas II. by the Russian Bolsheviks. The crime took place on the 16th July.

Wednesday: 24th.

I am at Jallange, *la belle Touraine, le jardin de la France!*

The change of air is restoring my health completely.

But what a queer country it seems where one may have lights without shutters being closed, where never a Gotha nor a Taube " powders " you from above, and where one may wander along the road without meeting a lowered bayonet with a poilu or a Tommy at the other end of it, smiling or scowling as the case may be, and demanding your " travelling permit "!

Today is the baptism of Anne Odette, my son's second child. I act as both godfather and godmother. In time of war the Sacraments are made easier. You can even marry by proxy! After all, one can renounce the devil and all his works without godparents! Today, anyway, it is I alone who have to stand up to Satan and take on all responsibility!

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Saturday: 27th.

We have counter-attacked, and this seems to have been successful.

The battle is proceeding on the Marne and all the Allies are taking part. The papers say that 800 tanks have been employed during the last few days.

The enemy is growing weary and is suffering severe losses.

I am going to see my little grandsons Olivier and Jacques; my daughter is still in America, and they are being "mothered" by good Mlle. Chauvette, just as she mothered me in the year of grace 1878.

Tuesday: 30th.

General Birdwood has sent me a photograph of the Château of Maucreux, which he cut from a newspaper. What a ruin, what vandalism! On the 18th of this month, the Germans, as they retreated, indulged in their usual pillage, and blew up a wing of the château. Then, from a safe distance, they bombarded it heavily in order to demolish the fine building. My family will have contributed a large share of the burden of this war!

Wednesday: 31st.

Foch, Haig, Pershing, and Pétain, reunited at the Château of Bombon (Seine-and-Marne), have decided on a general offensive to drive the Germans back to the frontier, the Allies pursuing them "with drawn swords." We all hope that our troops, doing honour to their admirable discipline, will march triumphantly into Berlin, sowing neither terror nor ruin in their passage, and thus proving that civilization is not an empty word.

AUGUST, 1918

Sunday: 4th.

Soissons has been delivered from the enemy.

General Mangin's "Chasseurs" entered the town on Friday, the 2nd, and the Germans fell back.

Is it the beginning of a general retreat?

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Paris freed, Château-Thierry reconquered, 200 villages delivered, 85,000 men taken prisoners, and 700 guns captured. The Allies have passed from the banks of the Marne to those of the Aisne.

Thursday: 8th.

On a proposal made by M. Clémenceau, General Foch has been created a Marshal of France.

It is a reward for past services, and emphasizes for generations to come the authority of the man called to lead the armies of the *Entente* to victory.

In Flanders the English have attacked Vieux Berquin, by Merville. This touches us nearly, and the battle is being fought between Vieux Berquin and Bailleul. Outtersteen is said to be delivered, and the firing line has receded considerably beyond the Forest of Nieppe, where it has been since April.

Here is the magnificent Order of the Day addressed by General Berthelot, commanding the 5th Army, between the Marne and Rheims, to the British troops in this sector:

"No sooner had it landed than your army corps, holding it a point of honour to participate in the counter-offensive which had stopped the furious advance of the enemy on the Marne and sent them in confusion towards the North, threw itself with ardour into the fray. For ten successive days, without respite, they harassed the enemy, keeping close on his heels, until, after a fight, they made their own the valley of the Ardre, copiously sprinkled with their blood.

"Thanks to the heroic courage and proverbial tenacity of these sons of Great Britain, the efforts, continued and repeated, of this brave army corps have not been in vain. Twenty-one officers, more than 1,800 soldiers taken prisoners, 140 machine-guns, and 40 cannons won from the enemy; the valley of the Ardre reconquered, together with such heights that dominate it north and south; such is the balance sheet to the credit of the British who came to the aid of the 5th Army.

Scotchmen from the mountains, under the command of General Campbell, men from Yorkshire, under the command of General Braithwaite, Australian and New

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Zealand Cavalry, all of you, officers and men, so brilliantly commanded by General Sir Alexander Godley, you have added a glorious page to your history. Marfaux, Chaumusy, the mountain of Bligny, these names can be written in letters of gold in the annals of your regiments. Your French friends will always treasure the memory of your brilliant bravery and your perfect comradeship in combat."

Saturday: 17*th.*

General Monash writes to say that the five Australian Divisions now under his command have covered themselves with glory. Each day they take more prisoners, and up to the day of writing they number 8,744.

General Beauvoir de Lisle writes and says he was at La Motte a few days ago, and that it has not been damaged any more lately, but that the village is quite destroyed. He says that when next I come we must discuss the advisability of repairing the roof and the walls of the château before the wet weather comes, as they may crumble away in the winter.

Tuesday: 20*th.*

The Premier went yesterday to the front to decorate Marshal Haig.

General Rawlinson and Lord Derby were present at the ceremony, in addition to many other French and English Generals. M. Clémenceau repeated his congratulations on the brilliant successes which had won him the supreme distinction of the Military Medal.

Saturday: 24*th.*

Yesterday the troops of General Rawlinson (4th British Army) entered Albert. There is a big advance, then, on the part of the Allies, and I am watching eagerly to see whether I cannot get home!

Here they found the statue of the Virgin Mary surmounting the ruined town, whilst the church has been almost entirely demolished. This statue was considered miraculous by all those that the attack took to the gates of Albert.

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The day before yesterday M. Poincaré presented the Field-Marshal's baton to Foch and the Military Medal to Pétain.

It is right that the services of these two great chiefs should be recognized.

Thursday: 29th.

From the positions of the Armies, the probabilities are that it will be the 1st Army, commanded by General Horne, which will sweep along the front of Valenciennes. So I have decided to send a line to the Army commander, enclosing a letter to Louis, my brother-in-law. The big envelope containing both letters I shall confide to the British Red Cross, whose headquarters are at Boulogne-sur-Mer. They will get it through, if anyone can.

SEPTEMBER, 1918

Tuesday: 3rd.

Our successes continue.

Péronne has been retaken, and the Germans are retreating on the Somme.

The British Press comments with enthusiasm on the brilliant victory of the British troops on the Arras-Cambrai road.

The *Daily News* says: "The offensive has taken on a character so powerful and so irresistible that all possibility of a German rally now seems out of the question."

Wednesday: 4th.

From the 1st the enemy has been in definite retreat! Near us, at home, La Bassée, Laventie, Steenwerck, Neuve Église, Estaires, and Wulverghem are free, and on the 2nd the fall of Lens opened the gates to Bapaume and Cambrai. The Canadians took Quéant by assault.

I have the hope of soon being able to return to La Motte, and to get to work once more amongst my brave peasants—who have even migrated as far as Normandy

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—and to efface as quickly as possible all traces of the war. The most difficult thing to do will be to get them to return, for I do not know where some of them went, and the military authorities seem in no hurry to see the countryside repopulated.

Thursday: 5th.

There is activity all along the front.

Yesterday the honours of the day went to the gallant army of General Byng.

The Americans, for their part, took the offensive near St. Mihiel.

Hope beats strong in all hearts!

The British have reached the Canal du Nord. Victory will be ours; before the end of the year we shall be in Berlin.

Sunday: 29th.

In spite of my preoccupation with the Flanders campaign, I am also interested in affairs in Palestine, chiefly owing to my friendship for General Allenby. I must write to him and get his opinion of certain enigmatical personalities, such as Emir Feisul and T. E. Lawrence.

He should be able to tell me much that would be of interest—that is, if he does not write and remind me that in time of war we must be very discreet!

We are living on our daily communiqué.

Amaury has been sent to Bordeaux in order to assist with the first American squadrons, in spite of his urgent request to be allowed to return to the front, where he would soon be a squadron-leader.

I have had a telegram announcing the death of Alain de Champagné, my nephew; he was badly wounded in 1914 at Notre Dame de Lorette, where his lung was pierced by a bullet when he was sniping.

He had hardly recovered when he returned to active service, and I suppose it was too much for him. He died at the Château de Craon.[1] The whole countryside will mourn him, as he was greatly esteemed.

[1] Château de Craon, département de la Mayenne.

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OCTOBER, 1918

Friday: 4th.

On the 1st I went to Craon, by Tours, which is a very troublesome journey. I left at eight in the morning, and got there at 5.30 in the afternoon. Yesterday was the funeral, and I returned to Paris at once, travelling by night. Today is the anniversary of my mother's death, in 1886, while I was awaiting her at La Motte au Bois. I shall never forget the awful journey I had after getting a telegram which hid the truth from me. It is always a heavy day to me! I am depressed and sad!

Sunday: 6th.

Bordeaux.—Friday evening, at about ten o'clock, my telephone bell rang. An unknown voice was speaking. I gave my name, and the now agitated voice spoke again. "Madame," it said, "I am a friend and comrade of your son. He has been hurt under circumstances which I will come and explain to you. Just give me time to reach you in a taxi. Can you receive me?" Three-quarters of an hour later Captain de Lalande was there giving me the dreadful details. The military car used by Amaury when going from one aerodrome to another had collided with a farmer's cart, the shaft, rising above the left side of the car, ran into Amaury's body near the heart and penetrated the left lung. His friend did not hide the gravity of his condition, but said he was in good hands in the American hospital. But I remembered poor Hamilton Grace. The cases seemed identical, and I saw rising before my eyes the coffin in the big hall at La Motte au Bois at the end of 1914!

I sat with an icy chill stealing over me, while Captain de Lalande tried to encourage me.

I was asking myself if I had the courage to undertake the long journey in that torture of suspense. Then I thought of my daughter-in-law, who had also had to go

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alone in the same agony of doubt as to whether it were life or death!

Just before the train left I had a wire from her, saying: "Condition grave, but not desperate. Expecting you."

She had seen him again, at least, and he had not died alone in the hospital. I have faith to believe that the most cruel of sacrifices will be spared me. Had he, poor boy, a presentiment, for he was always clamouring to go back to his squadron in Champagne? For three years the war has spared him. Is he to fall a victim to his duty at the rear?

I got to Bordeaux at five o'clock this morning, after a sleepless night of torture. His condition does not change, and he will be in danger for a fortnight; there is always the risk of complications.

And the last straw is that there is an epidemic of influenza in the town! A nurse working in the next ward to Amaury has died of it. In the afternoon I went to the hospital. Amaury recognied me; he is very weak and breathing is torture for him; I can't bear to think of it.

How I am suffering! My daughter exiled for her health; my son struck down and on a hospital bed!

If Amaury gets well he will owe it to the providential fact that one of the greatest doctors in America (Major Gros) was sitting by him in the car. When the accident happened he took charge of him, and prevented his friend and the chauffeur from moving him until it was safe.

The slightest change of position for some time after the wound had been given would have produced a fatal hæmorrhage. This same doctor has shown the greatest devotion, and performed agonizing, but necessary, operations on Amaury *without chloroform*, as, with the heart in its present state, he could not stand an anæsthetic.

Monday: 7th.

After the Austrian initiative and the Bulgarian defection, the German Empire in its turn is asking for peace!

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Through Swedish channels Germany, Austria, and Turkey are demanding a general armistice and the opening of negotiations for peace.

The hour is approaching, then, when the balancing of accounts must be done—accounts arising from the international conflict, whereof the entire responsibility rests upon our enemies.

Owing to the bravery of our soldiers and the genius of our leaders, they are now reduced to crying for peace.

The Allied Governments will seek to make such terms as are demanded by Right and Justice.

Tuesday: 8th.

It is hard waiting like this. They say there cannot be a change, for better or worse, for many days yet, and so we can only possess our souls in patience.

The situation is all the more serious as a number of the nursing staff are victims of the influenza epidemic which has just broken out in the hospital.

Wednesday: 9th.

Cambrai is delivered, and the route to Valenciennes is opening. What will be the fate of Sebourg? And what fresh tragedies await the unfortunate Louis?

We have no indications yet as to the reply President Wilson will make to the proposals of the Central Empires.

All the papers discuss it at great length and treat it as "feelers for peace."

Thursday: 10th.

President Wilson has delayed sending his reply. The Note appeared to him to be obscure.

No doubt new negotiations will be opened.

In the meantime, the British armies under Generals Byng and Rawlinson and the French Army are "hustling" the enemy between St. Quentin and Cambrai.

The Germans are beaten all along the line.

They are falling back everywhere, leaving on the

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ground yielded to the Allies a good part of their soldiery and guns.

Friday: 11*th.*

We went to see Amaury today, but were only allowed to stay a few minutes, as he finds it terribly difficult to breathe, and the effort he makes to show his joy at seeing us is liable to retard his progress.

Emily has wonderful courage, but I wonder if her faith in recovery is genuine or whether it is simulated in order to give me the same courage.

Saturday: 12*th.*

I read in the papers that on the 10th the Canadians occupied Cambrai. It is another stage towards Sebourg, and I think of the surprise I shall give my brother-in-law when I take his daughters to him! After four years of separation! Is it to compensate for the cruel trial that I am going through that I owe this comforting news from Flanders? The horizon grows lighter with every communiqué.

Monday: 14*th.*

Bordeaux is a pretty town and I have many friends there, but in the anxiety that I am going through all seems sad and gloomy. I shall always keep a painful impression of the quay along which I went on my visits to the hospital.

Tuesday: 15*th.*

The retreat is continuing. Little by little the enemy is leaving our *départements.*

Every day shows fresh progress in the liberation of France and Belgium.

We have confidence in approaching victory.

Friday: 18*th.*

At last Amaury is a little better, and the doctors seem to think he will live. During these days of cruel anxiety I have thought so much of those mothers who have had to weep for the death of their sons, and I pray to God

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to spare me this sorrow and to console them in their grief.

The idea that I could now go back to La Motte au Bois preoccupies Amaury, and he asks me to go to Paris this very day, and then straight on North.

In his present state all worries should be avoided, so I must leave, much as I regret having to do so, for he has barely reached convalescence.

Saturday: 19*th.*

Amaury goes on very well; he is convalescent, and only thinks of getting out of hospital as quickly as possible. As for me, I am not sorry to think that I may soon get back to La Motte au Bois.

Lille has been freed after four years of occupation by the Germans! On the 14th they began their preparations by destroying bridges and railways, and on the 15th they set fire to the railway station.

On the 17th Roubaix and Douai were also freed. My letter will soon be delivered to Louis by one of the officers of a brigade belonging to General Horne's army. I know that even in the most critical moments my friends have never forgotten to carry out any mission I have confided to them.

British soldiers have entered the town, and immediately the Allied flags were run up on all public buildings.

The Mayor in a proclamation addressed the citizens thus:

"At last the terrible nightmare which weighed upon us is destroyed.

"Lille is delivered, and at last the cry so long stifled upon our lips may be uttered freely—the cry of 'Long live France.'"

Sunday: 20*th.*

Denis, the old caretaker of Maucreux, has come back to Paris. He recounts this curious story:

When the first German car arrived in the courtyard of the château, one of the four German officers who were inside jumped on to the steps and slapped Denis on the

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back, saying: "Hullo, my old Denis, don't you recognize me? I used to come here quite often with my masters, who were friends of yours. I was chauffeur in this neighbourhood, and now there is not one château round about the forest of Villers Cotterets that I do not know. You can imagine how useful this is for the Staff! Before the war you used to give us indifferent wine. Come along now, hand over the key of the cellar, and in champagne we will drink the health of the Marquis."

The German intelligence service was at work in France long before the war. But they were mistaken in trying to march on Paris; the Allies barred their way.

Wednesday: 23rd.

Felix and I left Paris yesterday for the North. On the way, delayed by the state of the roads (mostly destroyed, in fact), we asked hospitality of General Birdwood at headquarters. The little Château of Labussière was full, but a young officer gave up his room to me, and, as it was too late to remove all his things, I slept in very military and masculine surroundings. My brother, discreetly declining to disturb even the most modest of young officers, put up at the Laurent-Doulen's Farm, which was also pretty "full up." Felix came to breakfast, and we heard of the gay doings in their billet. There were ladies who sang and danced. The Generals seemed to regret not having been asked, but the young officers evidently preferred the solitary chaperonage of the old poilu! Whatever his age, the Frenchman is prepared to go on the "razzle-dazzle."

Thursday: 24th.

At 9.30 we left for La Motte au Bois by Béthune and Merville, which are in ruins. In the latter town all the bridges are gone and the church ruins are extraordinary, the walls seeming to hang on empty air!

What shall we find farther on? I was asking myself this question all the way. Then we reached the forest, where the invasion was stopped. Many more trees have been cut down since I left. The road through the village

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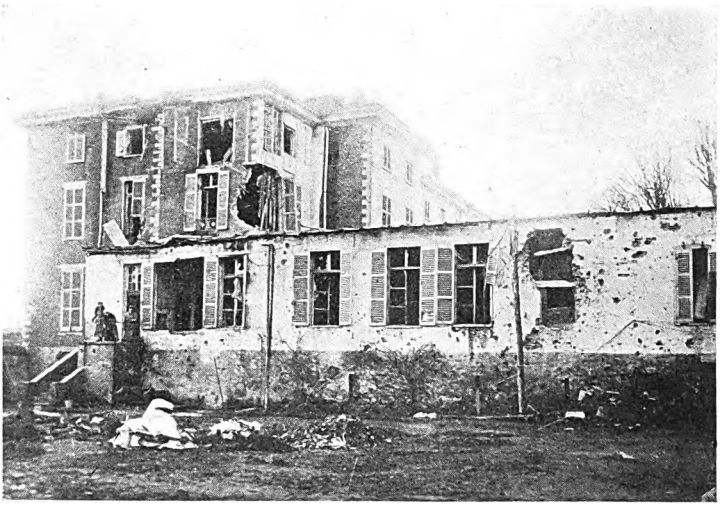
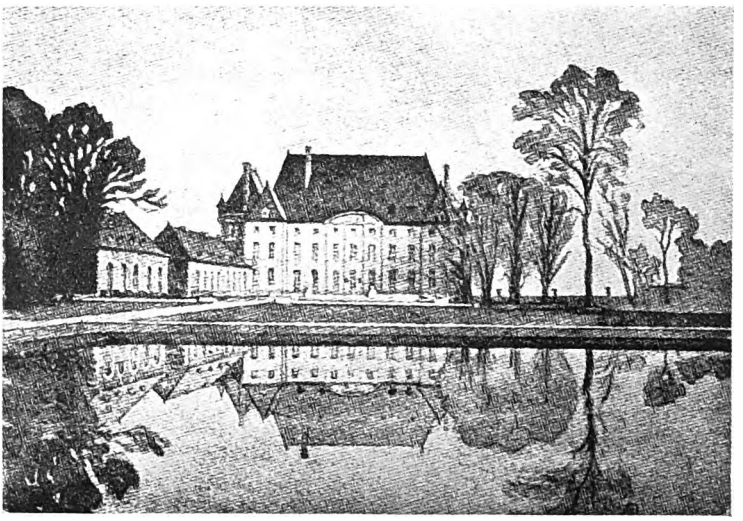


CHATEAU DE LA MOTTE AUX BOIS, OCT. 20, 1918



CHATEAU DE LA MOTTE AUX BOIS, 1925

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has been destroyed; sheds full of holes are standing beside it; only one of them looks as if it had been put up since the devastation. It is near the cemetery. Almost all the houses show traces of the bombardment, but are still standing, though sometimes the front or side wall has fallen. The side of the church towards Vieux Berquin is badly damaged, though the entrance side is intact. The car was unable to reach the château. There are enormous shell craters in the avenue, so we got out. I feel ashamed to confess the distress I felt before the ruins of my home—when those of so many people are not even *ruins*, but have disappeared completely. In the front of mine there is not a great deal of damage, but the east wall is down completely, taking with it the room that General Joly de Lotbinière formerly occupied, which is a mass of ruins, the cardinal's portrait a heap of dust like the rest!

The south front, looking towards Merville, where the walls are more than three feet thick, has resisted better, but there are shell holes here, too, and those projectiles which entered through windows and exploded inside have done enormous damage. The roof is like an old sieve! The upper stories have simply "sat down" one on top of the other. If one weren't sure of victory one would feel desperate and inclined to leave the ruins as they are, but France and her people look higher. That which has fallen under the hand of the barbarian shall be raised by patriotism, civilization, and faith in the future.

For me, after all, the two essentials are that Amaury is living and that I have Felix near me. Felix understood what I was thinking and took my hand. I have lost no very near relations on the field of honour, and before my ruined home I can yet thank God, while thinking of those charming lines in a letter from Amaury in October, 1914, when he had been for some time without news of me, a prisoner under the menace of invasion.

"I confess I would have sacrificed the roofs of my old home before the general invasion, and would see La Motte au Bois in ashes, were I only sure my dearest mother were not buried in the ruins."

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Felix and I left the poor old house that night for Cassel, as being the nearest place where we could find a night's lodging. The next day we returned to see the farms and to decide whether I could go back to live in the château.

Some of the farms are still deserted. I shall have to bestir myself to get the farmers back. They fled before the bombardment, driving as many of their cattle as they could.

Passing through Hazebrouck I saw Albert de Moras. He is about the only person who never left the town. Evacuated by the door, he re-entered by the window, so to say! The Mayor, who stayed with him until the last few days, left him the mayoral seal! This enabled him to fulfil the functions of the Mayor, without being Mayor, and to grant permits to those who wanted to return to their homes.

Friday: 25th.

This morning Felix and I made an early start from Cassel and went to Sercus to pick up Théophile, who has hitherto been unable, for military reasons, to penetrate the cordons and get back to La Motte au Bois. We decided to look at the little Château de Racquinghem, too. There might be some of my furniture left there yet, we thought.

We lunched at St. Omer and then set our faces towards La Motte au Bois.

In the village all that remains of the British Army is the Chinese Labour Corps, whose individual members are supposed to be picking up grenades, clearing away the ubiquitous barbed wire, stopping up shell-holes, and filling in trenches. All this they are doing with a deliberation which proves that the Sons of Heaven obviously believe that they have all Eternity before them! Their little buckets are like ladies' thimbles, and they pick up six square inches of earth at a time! And the ones that do this, mark you, are the busy bees among them!

I wanted to see if the houses still occupied had suffered at the hands of the yellow strangers with the

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almond eyes. The very few people left in the place assured me, however, that they were well disciplined under a Scots officer, who had made a delightful little billet for himself in the shed near the cemetery.

While I went to the village my brother remained at the château, which had been barricaded by the English when they left it!

My inquiries seemed so favourable in every way to the celestial ones that I felt I wanted to thank that Scots officer, when I happened to meet him as I was returning to the château.

In reply to my remarks he said, with an embarrassed smile and very cryptically: "Baroness, don't thank me till you've seen your brother again. He's waiting for you at the château." And with a salute he departed.

Rather puzzled I hurried off, crossed the bridge, and went to meet Felix, who advanced towards me showing all the signs of mortal combat!

While awaiting my return, Felix had walked round the house and found an inadequately barricaded hole, by which he climbed in. Hearing inside a conversation in an unknown tongue, he tiptoed to the drawing-room and there discovered three Chinamen carefully cutting down the cretonne wall hangings, and, as fast as they did it, hiding the loot under their garments or in a "cache" to which, no doubt, they intended to return later. The sudden apparition of Felix terrified them, and these burglars from the Flowery Land fled like the wind, jumped through the window "hole," and dashed across the park. Felix, forgetting his age and dignity as a French officer, tore after them and caught one, knocking him down, and calling Théophile (who is never far off unless evacuated!) to help to lock him up. The officer was then fetched, which is why I did not find this gentleman in his billet and why he received my compliments with so much reserve! Before I left I asked what on earth the Chinamen did with the stuff, and was told they sent it to their wives in China to make gowns of! Well, it is evidently an ill wind that blows *nobody* any good!

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Friday: 25th.

This afternoon we have had a most interesting visit to the unfortunate town of Bailleul, which has been razed to the ground! It was an interesting and historical old place, with a beautiful Flemish town hall and many delightful ancient houses. It was a town of some importance, with a large proportion of wealthy inhabitants living in the fine, dignified buildings that gave it character.

No two houses are alike in our old Flemish cities and villages, but now all that remains of old Bailleul is a scrap heap of rubbish, a horrible scene of desolation.

The Germans entered the town on the 7th October, 1914, and quite unexpectedly as far as the inhabitants were concerned. Indeed, it was often like this—the Uhlans seemed to appear with a most uncanny swiftness.

A resident of Bailleul, Madame Bels, the wife of a local doctor, who has been in the town practically throughout the war, gave me an interesting account of the early days of occupation by the Germans.

On the 7th October she and her daughter went out very much as usual to do some shopping in the town, when, to their horror, they found the "Place," or market square, in possession of the Germans!

The Mayor and three other local notables were prisoners in the hands of a regiment of dragoons, and were held as hostages for "the good behaviour of the town."

The German officers appear on this occasion to have acted with perfect courtesy, and the ladies, being politely reassured, returned home. Madame Bels insisted again on the extraordinary suddenness with which every tiny street as well as the open spaces seemed all at once to be filled with German troops. There were literally thousands of them seeming to spring from the ground itself before the astonished eyes of the townspeople, like a modern version of the story of the dragon's teeth.

During the first night of the occupation by the Germans there were strange scenes. The inhabitants felt as if they were asleep and enduring nightmares! All night the defile of troops continued. The street lamps

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were extinguished and it was a pitch dark night, so the troops marched to the lurid light of tossing torches.

Those in the houses were forbidden to close shutters or draw blinds, and every house was required to be illuminated within.

There was no privacy and no sleep for most people in Bailleul during that terrible week!

According to Madame Bels, the brutal attacks on women and other horrors happened a day or two after the first entry, when almost the whole of the German soldiery got into the wine cellars (many of them famous ones!) and became completely drunk!

In the villages and isolated farms near the town there were several entirely wanton murders of harmless civilians.

Later on, when the British arrived, the place became one huge camp, and, in spite of the bombardments, the concerts and cinemas were highly popular with the local inhabitants as well as with the troops.

Madame Bels keeps a "souvenir" of her British friends in the shape of a silver salver, on which are engraved the signatures of the British Army surgeons who were billeted in her house during the British occupation of the town.

Madame Bels only left the town when it was completely evacuated, and was one of its most heroic citizens during these terrible years.

No place has suffered more, few so much, as Bailleul, and, as I said, not a house remains!

Sunday: 27th.

Yesterday Felix and I were invited by General Birdwood to assist, on the following day, at the triumphal entry of the victorious troops into Lille, so recently delivered.

We left Cassel, travelling by car, having beforehand reserved a room at the Hôtel de l'Europe, where we were to pass the night.

The road was full of traffic and animation, the gates of the town were fairly blocked, indeed, and guarded by sentries. If we had not had our passes signed by

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General Birdwood we should most certainly have been sent back.

Near the market square (*Grand'Place*) we left the car, and directly the crowd caught sight of Felix's *bleu horizon* uniform they rushed at him, and, raising him, carried him shoulder high in triumph. The women flung their arms around him and kissed him, and I had all I could do to rejoin him in the surging mob.

When they realized that I was with him I came in for a share of fêting and embracing. It was only by astute manœuvring that we succeeded in getting back to the car from that excited mass of humanity gone mad at the sight of a French uniform.

Our first visit was to Monseigneur Charost, Bishop of Lille, that noble prelate, who, throughout the occupation, had dauntlessly "stood up" to the Germans and struggled against their many brutalities, including the deportations and requisitions from which Lille has suffered so badly. He received us with tears in his eyes. He is an old family friend, and he knows what my father and brother-in-law have had to endure at the hands of the enemy at Sebourg.

And he told us of the Calvary that all have had to climb who have lived in the invaded regions.

We then saw the Préfet, M. Armand Naudin, who succeeded M. Trépont, who was so abominably treated, and then exiled to Germany. Afterwards we visited M. Delsalle, the Mayor.

Monday: 28*th.*

Next day, alas! it was raining! At nine in the morning Felix and I went to the Square, where the grandstands were decorated with flags!

The success Felix had had the day before was the subject of conversation. The British officers chaffed him about the ladies' kisses, and Felix admitted he enjoyed some of them, but that others were a shade on the prickly side—hirsute charms being usually considered rather a masculine than feminine attraction! But why shouldn't the "bearded lady" show her appreciation of the old "poilu"!

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At ten o'clock the ceremony began. General Birdwood advanced on horseback, followed by his standard bearer, and then those two unrivalled hymns, the "Marseillaise" and "God Save the King," burst forth amid the wild acclamations of a people long and cruelly oppressed.

The General dismounted and received the flag of the town from the hands of the Mayor. A few speeches were exchanged, and then the General, going up on to the grandstand of honour, took his seat by Monseigneur Charost and the military and civil authorities to watch the filing past of the troops.

The rain had stopped, but the weather was grey. There passed a seemingly endless procession of English, Scots, Irish, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, and Indian troops—cavalry, infantry, artillery, ambulances, and travelling kitchens.

On our stand we were in good company with Mr. Winston Churchill, the Duchess of Sutherland and her daughter (with whom Felix began an innocent little flirtation), and numerous English officers.

In our group the blue of Felix's uniform made a bright spot in the midst of the khaki tunics. It was like a bit of blue sky in the middle of a square of our Flanders earth. One would have thought the khaki colour had been chosen to mingle with and fade into our wide plains, though, as a matter of fact, I believe khaki was chosen for the British Army during the South African War as a protection on the brown veldt.

We thought the procession had ended, when three travelling kitchens passed, on which were men in their shirt sleeves, and with grey trousers like those worn by the Germans. One soldier bore on his shoulder a monkey, which made a hideous grimace at us as it passed. An enemy, no doubt! Everyone was asking who they were. The mystery was soon cleared up, and we were told it was the kitchen car of a Portuguese regiment, which didn't belong to the procession at all! Finding all roads barred, they had philosophically decided to bring up the rear!

So we all shouted: "Long live Portugal!"

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Tuesday: 29th.

There is now persistent talk of an armistice.

President Wilson has just sent two notes—one to Berlin and the other to Vienna. France is watching the President, and trusts him to obtain the justice that she demands.

In the latest edition of the *Temps* I see that Austria is asking for a separate and immediate armistice and peace, and is begging President Wilson to take the necessary steps to this end.

Wednesday: 30th.

Because of my interest in the Anzacs, I asked General Birdwood to give me their war record, and these are the notes he made for me:

1915—Gallipoli.

1916—The Somme.

1917—Flanders.

1918—Defence against the German Divisions of Rupprecht of Bavaria, plus 16 extra Divisions asked for from the Kaiser.

Disembarked at Marseilles, the two Corps, Australians and New Zealanders, have had for Chiefs:

1st—General Sir William Birdwood.

2nd—General Sir Alexander Godley.

These two Corps came straight to Flanders from Gallipoli. The 1st Corps was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th Australian Divisions.

The 2nd Corps comprised the 3rd Australians, two English Divisions, and the New Zealand Division, this last being commanded by General Sir Andrew Russell, a New Zealander.

Later on, when the Australian Army asked for an Australian Commander-in-Chief, General Sir John Monash took the command, and then the N.Z. Division was attached to this Corps. The greatest harmony obtained between the Australians and the New Zealanders.

These troops detrained at Hazebrouck on the 13th April, 1916, my birthday! A presage perhaps of the great friendship to be shown to me by their Chiefs!

The advance guard was sent to Steenbecque, and

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while the headquarters of the N.Z. Division established itself at Blarenghem, that of the 1st Anzacs was at La Motte au Bois.

The 1st Brigade of Infantry was concentrated round Morbecque, the Rifle Brigade near Steenbecque, and the 2nd Brigade near Roquetoire.

The others were scattered about the country, awaiting their call to the front.

At the end of April all these troops were attached to the 2nd Army, commanded by General Sir Herbert Plumer, who resided at Cassel, having succeeded General Foch in that town.

The Australian Army made a brilliant beginning in its fighting in Flanders between Fleurbaix and Armentières.

NOVEMBER, 1918

Saturday: 2nd.

Paris, like all other towns, is today mourning her dead. The war has taken such a grim toll of young lives; so many heroes fallen in lonely and unknown graves.

Felix has returned from Wimereux, and, in spite of all his protests, he has been put on the retired list.[1] Poor Felix! His regret is all the more bitter because he was anticipating transporting his desk from Wimereux to Berlin, where, "Unter den Linden," he would have made a few calculations as to the German war debt! The German armies are in full flight; there is no longer any doubt about it. I hope we shall pursue them across the frontier!

In 1870 the Germans held Paris under the fire of their cannon, until the last sou of ransom had been paid! It

[1] My brother Felix's war record: In 1915 at sixty-three years of age, Verdun, left bank of the Meuse, Hill 304, and Morthomme in April and May; May and June, Béthune and Notre Dame de Lorette; September, Arras; December, 1915, to January, 1916, Lens; July and August, Champagne; 1917, retired from active service to the Staff of the Northern Regions, Boulogne-sur-Mer, where he has remained up till the present.

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is but just that our '75's should threaten their capital till our debt has been settled!

It is a complete rout for the enemy!

Every part of the formidable war machine which Germany had built up to carry out her designs of domination and conquest is falling to pieces!

Ferdinand of Bulgaria has fled amidst the jeers of his people, after seeing his army beaten by the troops of Marshal Franchet d'Esperey.

In Turkey, Enver Pasha has capitulated.

The black and yellow flag of the Austrian Empire no longer floats over the Hofburg.

Revolution rules in Budapest.

Such are the events of the day!

The climax is approaching for the Kaiser; well-deserved punishment is near.

Monday: 4th.

General Allenby writes me some interesting details about T. E. Lawrence. "He is an Englishman," he says, "who has travelled and explored a great deal in Arabia before the war. He is not a regular soldier, but an Oxford professor. He has a thorough knowledge of Arabic and the Arabs, and can go anywhere and do anything with them. He dresses as an Arab chief when with them. He has been instrumental in directing the Arabs in their operations against the Turks for a long period; and the Turks had set a price of ten thousand pounds on his head."

I am very large hearted when it comes to the charming guests I had during the war, one after the other, at La Motte au Bois. I have kept a very real sympathy for them all. Generals Allenby, Byng, Pulteney, Birdwood, Du Cane, and Beauvoir de Lisle were always full of thoughtful attention—I might almost say, of devotion—to me.

General Allenby was the first to give me confidence during the most critical and gloomy days that I experienced during the whole war. He seemed to me the Chief of a superior force come to our aid at the moment when I felt we were about to undergo the horrors of

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invasion. For me he personified that spirit of the British Empire which would not allow so great a crime to be committed against a free and peaceful people. His personality impressed me straight away when he arrived at the moment my fate was being decided. And I hope that, although the war is now apparently ending, our friendship will still continue.

I shared his tragedy as though it were my own. I do not know Lady Allenby, but from all I have heard of her I feel her son must have resembled her enormously, and beforehand I give her my friendship. It is sad that in their trial they should be separated, when they have so much need of one another. All that I can do for them I shall do, and the tomb of their young son will be the object of my care and devotion.

Tuesday: 5th.

General Godley writes: "I have been meaning for some time to write and tell you how pleased we all were to think that La Motte was delivered from the menace of the Boche. I went there one day and found it again a rest house for one of the divisions. But it was sad to see it without you there. . . . How glorious all the news is now—it all seems almost too good to be true, and I really believe we shall have peace very soon. I have been from Arras to Cambrai, and Cambrai to Valenciennes, since we came up from Champagne, and now we are still fighting and helping to drive the Huns away out of France for good. I heard from General Allenby the other day—what splendid things he has done!"

Wednesday: 6th.

Austria has capitulated.

Hostilities on all the Austro-Hungarian fronts stopped on the 4th November.

Thursday: 7th.

The papers publish the conditions of the Armistice imposed by the Allies on Austria-Hungary. The com-

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munication to the Chamber of these conditions marks the day as a historic one.

Patriotic fever is running high nowadays.

Saturday: 9th.

During the evening of the 7th the German delegates crossed the lines of our outposts and met Marshal Foch, who communicated the conditions of the Armistice.

They arrived this morning at Foch's General Headquarters, and asked for the Armistice.

The text of the conditions was first read to them and then handed to them. They asked for a suspension of hostilities.

It was refused.

The enemy has been granted seventy-two hours in which to consider their reply.

Monday: 11th.

Revolution has broken out in Germany. The Emperor William II. has abdicated. The Crown Prince, following his father's example, has renounced his rights to the throne.

It is therefore not the Emperor who will sign the peace after this war for which he is responsible. I regret this, if only for the reason that it would compel him to come to Versailles, where his grandfather's vanity made us undergo the saddest of humiliations. After having held Paris under the menace of his cannon during several months, whilst he extorted the last farthing of ransom, he insisted that peace should be signed at Versailles in the *Galerie des Glaces*, filled with the memories of the great Louis XIV. It is there that William II., humiliated, should sign his sentence with a trembling hand.

The ARMISTICE! The war is ended! It seems a dream. The nightmare, though, is past!

How shall we emerge from all this suffering—better or worse? Will reaction drive the world to pleasure, selfishness, and love of gain? Can those things result from privations and miseries so bravely borne?

Danger calls forth noble efforts—sometimes security

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brings idleness and cowardice which gain the upper-hand.

Tuesday: 12*th.*

To Marshal Foch yesterday fell the glorious task of signing at five o'clock in the morning that Armistice which announces the capitulation of Germany and the end of the world war.

On the front at eleven o'clock all fire ceased. The bells rang out in a Paris decked with flags. The war is ended!

The papers publish details of the interview between the Marshal Foch and the German Plenipotentiaries.

The latter were conducted into the presence of the Marshal, who, in a train standing near the Château du Francport, received them, with the British Admiral, Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, standing by him.

After a discussion of some duration the signatures were affixed at 5 a.m. to the document, which registers the capitulation of Germany.

Friday: 15*th.*

In the letter I sent through the British to Louis, at Sebourg, I promised to take his two daughters to him as soon as it was possible. As that time had now come, after getting travelling and petrol permits, we decided to start, my two nieces, myself, and young Madame Amidieu du Clos, whom I had agreed to take to Douai, where she wished to see what remained of her house and furniture.

She left Douai in 1914, evacuated with her mother and her children, and since then she had never heard from the old woman servant who promised to stay as caretaker.

In order to avoid roads known to be hopelessly destroyed we went via Amiens, where we arrived late on account of the convoys which kept crossing us on their way to Paris.

At Amiens we received hospitality at a convent; each of us had a nun's cell, and thus became acquainted with life in the cloister!

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On the 18th we continued our journey, and reached Cambrai at lunch-time, hoping to find some place in which we might feed! A vain delusion! Not the tiniest inn or beerhouse was open, and everyone is extremely parsimonious in regard to provisions, which are not as yet very liberally distributed.

I had a "brain wave," and we knocked at the door of an old couple, friends of Madame Amidieu du Clos. Soup was smoking hot upon the table, and, though there was only enough really for two, it was divided into five portions, and with a little cheese we did very well.

Our host described to us with great, good humour how he had managed to save the pretty metal decoration—a round knob—at the foot of his staircase. Every time the Germans came round requisitioning copper, brass, steel, etc., he hung his hat on the pretty old "apple"!

At Douai we left Madame Amidieu du Clos under her dismal-looking porch, full of shell-holes, after having confided her to the care of Captain Maude, of the Military Police, and Colonel Dutheil, Commandant of the town. Both advised my young friend to be extremely careful and circumspect, and forbade her even to *touch* furniture or anything else without first advising them of what she wished to do.

The enemy before retreating had employed all their ingenuity in making as dangerous as possible the anticipated return of the unfortunate refugees!

Specially timed bombs or electric contacts have been arranged so that, when the returning owner wants to push a bedstead back to its rightful place or pick up an innocent-looking cabbage lying incongruously in the middle of the drawing-room floor, there will be a dangerous explosion!

No doubt the Germans rubbed their hands with enjoyment to think of the *bonne farce* (good joke) they were preparing for their legitimate successors in the rooms where they had stamped about arrogantly for more than four years!

The life of a Frenchwoman or a little child would be

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a charming vengeance to repay them for being obliged to return stolen property to its rightful owners!

My nieces and I continued the journey, and I felt relieved to have had our load lightened of even one passenger for the sake of the springs of my car when I saw the state of the roads! This particular road to Sebourg is bordered by heaps of abandoned munitions, guns, and tanks, which show their gaunt-looking carcasses half embedded in the muddy fields. And here and there are huge nets hanging from trees, to hide a road or a battery, fantastically suggesting that the land is peopled by giant fishermen who have hung them out to dry!

Like innumerable spiders' webs are the masses of barbed wire, and the "pill-boxes" here and there make white spots on the dark horizon.

Great flocks of carrion crows rose heavily from each side as we passed; alas! what horrible sustenance do they find in the desolate-looking fields, stretching far away beyond the reach of the keenest human vision, those fields which have lately been the scene of the most terrible of dramas.

Everywhere on our route are the ruined villages, evidence of the heroic struggle France has made to recover her invaded land.

Valenciennes! An indescribable chaos! The railway station is a complete wreck, the roof blown right off. The extreme top of this roof has been removed so as to make a sort of bridge across the railway lines, and over this curious spring-board our car went. On leaving the town it was difficult to find the road to Curgies-Sebourg again, so entirely has the aspect of the place changed since pre-war days. None of the old landmarks remain; here an inn that marked a turning has vanished; there a street has been completely blocked up owing to the crash of an entire house; everything is different. The car wandered on as if in a maze, and there seemed no way out. Once we nearly stood on our heads in a shell-hole that the chauffeur had not noticed. My head was bruised, but was luckily protected to some extent by my hat. My nieces fell one upon the other, and so escaped worse damage.

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It was three o'clock when we drove through the gates of the château, and what was my astonishment to see floating over it the standard of the 22nd Corps (General Godley), with the famous sign of the "Tou-Tou"! I was happy to think it was one of my friends who had delivered Sebourg. General Godley was in the smoking-room, and seemed delighted to see us. He sent someone to find Louis, who was out in the woods, remarking wisely and kindly that it might be a considerable shock to him.

As my nieces and I sat there waiting we thought of the cruel hours passed by the aged father and his son under the constant menace of the enemy, completely abandoned and cut off from their own people, deprived of all news, and, more cruel still, of the final solitude of the son after his father's death. Poor Louis! Ignorant of everything happening and with no confidant for his sorrows, he had had to wait alone for the final deliverance. After half an hour the door opened and Louis entered, to be clasped in the arms of his daughters. Then he turned to me, and, taking my hand tenderly, he said: "Bless you for the happiness you bring me to-day!"

Leaving my nieces with their father in all the joy of reunion, I rejoined General Godley and asked his news.

The enemy, while continuously retreating, had, nevertheless, put up a desperate resistance.

The General asked me if we would dine at his mess, but I, knowing my brother-in-law's very sensitive nature, begged him to defer the invitation till the morrow.

A faithful old servant, Henri, and his wife served us in an underground room that Louis had made his dining-room during the war.

I found I could not question Louis on the subject of the sufferings that he had borne so heroically. I saw that he was on the verge of a breakdown, but he divined my desire to know details, and that night confided his war notes to me to read.

They had been jotted down in secret and hidden from the Germans, who would most certainly have

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seized them, seeing what an overwhelming accusation they remain of those of the enemy who came to Sebourg, where invariably they were treated with courtesy.

My sister-in-law[1] and my nieces, having got back to unoccupied France via Holland, in December, 1915, had already described to me their first contact with the Germans.

From the 3rd August, 1914, they began to hear cannon from the direction of Mons; then on the 24th the noise suddenly stopped and hope revived.

Alas! on the 25th, at 4.30 in the morning, Louis was awakened and dragged out as a hostage without time for explanation. He found himself outside in his night clothes, with a German officer threatening him with a revolver if the slightest resistance were offered at Sebourg! It was a cool morning, and he was kept there shivering for hours. An old country woman, with the haziest ideas as to what was happening, offered him some coffee, remarking she was sorry she had not enough to offer it to the English gentlemen, too!

Louis whispered that they were Germans, and the old lady fled as if from horns and tail!

About eleven o'clock Louis was taken back to the château; the cannon began to boom, and the officer departed, assuring him that a whole Army Corps was shortly arriving.

And, indeed, during the afternoon, hidden by the roadside in bushes and undergrowth, the inhabitants of the château saw steadily marching past in deathlike silence a long line of formidable cavalry, followed by artillery and infantry, which for four hours filed past the agonized watchers—giving the fullest impression of that great German military machine, disciplined and prepared for so long beforehand with the one object of overwhelming our unfortunate country.

In its wake it left incendiarism, pillage, and ruin, the methodical and ordered devastation of every home!

When he got back after this tragic afternoon Louis

[1] Anita Carroll, of Maryland, whose grandfather, Charles Carroll, was one of those who signed the Declaration of Independence of U.S.A.

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found four horsemen at the château, one of them an officer, who said to him: "We—Paris 3rd September!" Louis looked him straight in the eyes and answered: "God permitting!"

Towards the end of August, 1914, a large number of English were in hiding in the Forest of Mormal, and heroic women (most of them young girls) secretly took food and drink to them at the peril of their lives, washing their linen for them and lending them clothes.

Louis had a talent for map-drawing, and used to make them little charts of the country roads, so that they were able to get safely to Holland.

The Anzin Mines, where my father-in-law, before he died, was the only administrator in the occupied territory, were the cause of much anxiety to Louis. He resorted to every sort of ruse to get to Valenciennes and to avoid the regulation against the circulation of civilians which were strictly enforced.

He was constantly implored by the country people to intercede for them in cases of requisitioning of crops, confiscations, etc. He wore himself out, body and soul, and I find him terribly changed after this long-drawn-out ordeal.[1] He told me that, in spite of the hardness of the separation from his wife and daughters, their departure had been a relief to him, as it meant fewer mouths to feed and one great anxiety removed.

At the château there was soon no meat nor eggs, and coffee and butter were requisitioned by the enemy, who even brutally refused to grant the small allowance of milk ordered by the doctor for my father-in-law, then ninety-two years old and ill!

In 1916 the district had to bear the heavy trial of deportations and removal of people as "hostages," and this was absolutely unjustifiable, as the Germans had always been treated with more than ordinary courtesy at Sebourg and in the neighbourhood. Men, women, striplings, and young girls were sent in the depths of winter to the Camp of Holzminden. They were of every

[1] The Baron Louis de La Grange died in July, 1919, largely as a result of his experiences and sufferings during those terrible years.

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class, from the highest to the simplest of the people. As they were only notified at the last moment of the blow about to fall on them, they had no time to collect any but the scantiest of clothing to take with them, and on their arrival at the camp they had no proper or adequate bed coverings. The beds and mattresses were verminous, and women were obliged to perform their toilet under the most revolting conditions.

This abominable business lasted more than six months. The younger men were treated as civil prisoners and condemned to hard labour during long weeks. Many died under the strain, and others were sent back to Valenciennes hopelessly ill with various forms of tuberculosis. The hospital (Hôtel Dieu) is still, it seems, full of these unfortunate victims.

My father-in-law died on the 11th February, 1917; in spite of his great age he was in perfect bodily health at the outbreak of war, and succumbed to the lack of food and, eventually, to the need of certain medicines.

The "requisitioners" having seized all the potatoes and coal, there was privation and famine in every home. The whole population depended for fuel on the wood that Louis had cut down methodically (to avoid theft, fraud, and unfairness, which would inevitably have occurred had not legitimate supplies been granted regularly).

Louis himself lived like the simplest peasant, a cap on his head and his overcoat on even indoors, so bitterly cold did the house become.

Early in June, 1918, the Staff of General von Gilser was replaced by that of General von Deimling, and showed itself even more noisy and rowdy than its predecessor. The shouting, singing, and laughter lasted most of the night, so that sleep in the château became impossible. Up to about June of this year the German yoke lay heavily on the country, but about that time the arrogance of the officers began to grow noticeably less, and they showed considerable anxiety with regard to some formidable explosions heard towards Blanc Misseron, which seemed to shake the whole countryside. Louis learnt that it was their huge munition dumps

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being blown up, and drew his own conclusions as to how matters were going!

In July, 1918, the Germans requisitioned all the metal they could get—saucepans, preserving pans, stair rods, everything they could lay hands on that could be melted down for cannon! The church bells were hurled down from the belfries and loaded on to lorries. The pretty bells of Sebourg, gifts of the de La Grange family at different periods to celebrate marriages or baptisms, met the common fate.

In August my brother-in-law was seriously ill, but the tiny quantity of milk asked for by the doctor was pitilessly refused.

Refugees began to arrive, evacuated from various places. One old woman of seventy-seven was completely exhausted, having come from Cambrai on foot. Valenciennes and Sebourg were given up to pillage. On the roads were great vans full of French furniture on its way to Berlin.

On the 21st September, 268 people arrived with their curé from a village near Cambrai, and on the 1st October Germans who were leaving Sebourg charitably warned the people that they needn't bother to get friendly with their successors, for they would not stay long!

On the 8th October the management of the Anzin Mines received orders to evacuate, as the mines were to be flooded and the machinery destroyed.

In the farms German horses feasted on unthreshed wheat, so that nothing should be left to the miserable owners.

Rich and poor loaded all they could on to lorry or handcart. From the 17th October the Germans spoke only of peace at any price. Yet at that moment the cannon was silent; but on the 21st October the sound began again in the direction of Denain. The firing line was approaching. The last head of cattle had gone, the German batteries and machine-guns were in the park, and four days later the bombardment began in earnest. Louis listened and bore it with joy in his heart, for he knew it meant deliverance.

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Under the General's indulgent eye the moving of the château furniture began!

They had called up the men from seventeen to thirty-five, but most of them had succeeded in hiding themselves, hoping that in the panic they would be forgotten.

The 3rd November was a red-letter day for Sebourg. In the morning General Bering asked for Louis and said to him: "I have good news for you. You will see no more German officers in your château. We are the last to go. Everyone else left during the night. It is 'all up' with us! We are falling back to other positions."

While the General was speaking, Henri, the old family servant, came in and murmured in his master's ear that they had forced his door open and stolen the trunk containing all his clothes! Two very fine pieces of Chinese furniture had disappeared from the drawing-room.

The German General was informed, and he said that, should he find them, they would be sent back.

But to Louis nothing of that sort mattered now! He was possessed by one idea only—to rush out and meet the British and tell them the country was free! Without reflecting on possible consequences he strode out along the Curgies road. Alas! not a mile had he gone when two Boches suddenly rose from out of a ditch and he was caught!

He temporized, and showed them a paper signed "Bering," a requisition order of no value at all, but the Germans, anxious to get the job over, led him back to the château at the bayonet-point.

Late that evening, when once more he was master in his own house and able to shut his own door, he heard a knocking. He hurried to open, with a welcome for the deliverance on his lips, only to be greeted in a German jargon! It was two "Fritzes," who, very meekly and looking rather silly, had brought back the Chinese furniture, covered with mud but very slightly damaged. *Restitution in extremis!*

On the 4th November the Germans started an intense bombardment, hoping to ruin everything by way of revenge for their forced retreat. The church tower at

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Sebourg fell. This was their last little delicate attention —*carte de visite, P.P.C.!*

French officers, interpreters to an English brigade nearby, brought Louis my letter which I had confided to General Horne of the 1st Army. They took back a telegram for Paris which, despatched on the 4th, reached Paris on the 6th!

Louis compared my letter to the olive branch in the ark. It was the first real joy he had known for many a long day, and the united hands of the Allies had brought it to him.

On the 6th November the first detachment of British arrived towards midnight—a Major was installed in his offices in the basement, and the next day General Sir Alexander Godley arrived with his brilliant Staff!

Saturday: 16*th.*

The Staff is composed of the same officers as at La Motte au Bois, and they are trying to make their official visit as homelike as possible.

General Godley has asked me to remain on for a few days, as he would like to take me to Brussels to witness the State entry of the King and Queen of the Belgians into their reconquered capital. Then, too, the King of England is expected here at Sebourg very soon. But, unfortunately for me, time presses. I must return to La Motte au Bois, whither the farmers and peasants will gradually be struggling back. I have asked the General to take Louis instead. After the weary years of oppression he will appreciate it even more than I could. It will be a fine sight, to which they are looking forward in Belgium.

Sunday: 17*th.*

La Motte au Bois.—I am at home again! I called for Madame Amidieu du Clos and took her to St. Omer, where she got the train for Paris, and then I came on here with my maid. It seems very ruined indeed!

There is only one room on the ground floor, the drawing-room, which can be more or less closed. The

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chimney seems undamaged, and I have had a little coal grate put in. There is no furniture at all, since all mine was sent to Versailles when the Germans were at our very doors. There were some dirty, greasy old mattresses that had served the gunners during the bombardment lying heaped up in the cellars, and I had three or four of the least horrible brought up and we are prepared to "camp."

The windows are, of course, paneless; the British nailed some sort of oiled cloth across the apertures. Our old gardener and his wife have returned, and we have settled down to live as best we can in miserable discomfort.

Monday: 18*th.*

Lying in bed (a euphemism!) these are my meditations and distractions at six in the morning after the first night I have spent in my old home!

Dawn! I watch it creeping up through the battered shutters. Bits of shell have torn away the wooden slats and become embedded in the ceiling.

These "wounds" date from last May, when I came here with the General in charge of the sector to retrieve a few "souvenirs" of my own! I begin to understand why all the time he exhorted me to "Hurry! Hurry!" Luckily for me, I did not then realize in the infernal and overwhelming din of the bombardment which were British shells departing or Boche ones arriving!

It was about this time that bombardments so often began, too! A new sound comes drifting through my oiled window-blinds. It was like an angry pack of hounds yapping, but the noise came from the great flocks of carrion crows, which are now feeding on the mass of horrible and revolting débris of every kind left behind by the war. It is a subject on which one can but touch very lightly. It is too sickening!

The daylight is growing steadily, and there comes another sound—an echo from the far-away Great Wall of China—a band of the Sons of Heaven go pattering and chattering past in charge of a British sergeant. They are exchanging weird-sounding jokes and witti-

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cisms which should be very funny judging by the uproarious laughter they provoke. They go in Indian file along the towing-path in the early morning mist, wearing little caps with feathers on either side, and carrying their working tools over their shoulders or balancing pots hung on to long, flexible bamboo poles.

The bird tamers are there, too, with a wire cage in which two sparrows hop uneasily to and fro.

But to return to my drowsy reflections! Now my ears hear a familiar sound, the harsh harmony of the Flemish speech, nearly as incomprehensible to me as the previous Chinese!

Théophile was certainly going to get fires lighted—and all at once came the thoughts of old times, the quiet past, its family joys, and the peace of the old walls.

The ancient fortifications have long since disappeared as useless. In the cellars or yards some old cannon balls lay about as props for unwieldy doors or gates, forgotten by old Marlborough's men, perhaps, as I pointed out to H.M. the King of England when I had the honour of receiving him here in 1914.

And now the clock is striking eight, and I must get up to "open" my windows—which, open or shut, are about equally useful against the rigours of the weather!

Later.

A gala performance was given for me in the courtyard later in the day. *Dramatis Personæ:* One sergeant and two sparrows. Stage Manager: One Chinee. Audience: Myself.

A little feathered "fly," as used for trout fishing, was stuck in the sergeant's cap, he taking his rôle with becoming gravity. The Chinaman at twenty paces placed the sparrow on his arm, made a clucking noise, flung up the arm, and the sparrow flew to the sergeant, fluttered round him, touching him with his wings, took the feather—on which there is usually something to eat, no doubt—lifted his tail, and returned to his trainer, not without having left on the sergeant's shoulder the "souvenir" so dear to the English heart (especially if left by a French sparrow!).

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Tuesday: 19*th.*

Since the 11th Paris has been living through days of patriotic excitement!

There are processions and manifestations dominated by the long-desired cry: "The day of glory has come at last."

Our soldiers raise the "Marseillaise," which is taken up by the crowds, and the Tommies and Yankees sing "God Save the King" and "The Star-spangled Banner."

The President of the Republic has addressed letters to the Secretary for War (M. Clémenceau) and the Secretary for the Navy (M. Georges Leygues), in which he expresses the thanks of all France.

In this hour of joy and national pride the thoughts of all French people are turned to the heroes who have fallen. Each one of them brought his stone towards the magnificent triumphal arches under which the victors pass. The glory of France is made up of the devotion and sacrifice of all her children.

Saturday: 30*th.*

Our worthy farmers are coming back one by one, and it is pitiable to see their grief at the sight of their ruined houses, empty and open to the four winds of heaven. But how, indeed, could it be otherwise in the case of a village abandoned for eight months? The great need is for horses. Ploughs are to be found stuck in the mud of the fields or lying in the forest. They are being roughly mended, but there isn't the vestige of a beast to draw them, and there seems no chance of procuring any.

DECEMBER, 1918

Sunday: 8*th.*

Providence has come to our aid in the shape of a British battery of artillery resting at Morbecque.

General Birdwood has authorized me to choose from this battery all the horses and men required to work every available plough.

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I am going today to Morbecque to arrange the matter with the officers.

Tuesday: 10*th.*

I have 50 horses and 75 men, who, before the war, were agricultural labourers, and have arranged for them to come to La Motte au Bois.

Work has begun, but the first trials were something of a comedy. The great strong Clydesdales, imagining they were expected to pull a cannon out of the mud, exerted themselves magnificently, and—the light ploughs flew up into the air!

The most extravagantly absurd conversations take place between the calm, dignified Tommies walking at the horses' heads and the gesticulating, frenzied farmers trying to make them understand what they want, and all the time trying to guide the plough!

Often the farmer is horror-struck at turning up an unexploded shell—and not necessarily a "dud," by any means—but Tommy, from long practice, picks it up tenderly, as a mother her child, and places it gingerly on a heap of soft earth! I am spending my days as interpreter between the man at the horse's head and the man at the tail of the plough. The fact that twice a day the Tommy unharnesses the horse from the plough and goes off to Morbecque (three miles away) for lunch and tea drives the farmer distracted, as he eats his meal on the spot, having had it brought to him by a daughter.

Well, we must hope it is "Slow but sure."

The fact remains that the good soldiermen are doing a great work, and whatever harvest there is in this district in 1919 will be partly owing to them!

General Birdwood, anxious to know how things were going, asked me to go over to Lille, and there I saw the great services rendered by the British Army to civilians. Lorries supplement the tramways and small local railways outside the town, carrying workmen to the factories, and I am glad to testify to this help given by our allies, not only during the war, but after it, to the civilian population in general.

I should like to see a sword of honour offered to

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General Plumer at Roubaix and General Birdwood at Lille, in recognition of their deliverance of these towns.

We heard an amusing story from the curator of the museum in Lille. He had in his charge a valuable statue attributed to Michael Angelo, which, before the war, had often been examined by *savants* from other countries. This treasure he hid in his cellar in 1914. No sooner had the Germans occupied Lille than an officer, in whom he recognized a German professor who had before the war visited him about the Michael Angelo, came to the museum and demanded the statue. The good curator thereupon said, with a sob in his voice, that he no longer had this valuable work of art, because the English had already stolen it when they were in Lille. The German never doubted this explanation of its disappearance—it appeared to him a most reasonable one!

Friday: 20th.

Nothing remains here now of the British Army except the detachment of Chinese coolies and their Scottish Major.

The Chinese don't do much work, I fancy, and are simply being kept here because there are not enough ships available to take all the Chinese home. I watch their leisurely ways, and I wonder if anyone really believes they are ever going to *fill in trenches* with their toy buckets!

Luckily our hard-working Flemings go at the job more seriously!

The winter is passing and the country is repeopled. My daughter-in-law has obtained help from America for the devastated regions, and as soon as Amaury was demobilized he organized societies for reconstruction.

Who will pay what we need for the restitution of our unfortunate country? All the efforts seem to be demanded from the *victims* of the war, that terrible scourge, unloosed by the *Germans*.

Luckily France has wonderful vitality and recuperative powers.

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Monday: 23*rd.*

I feel I must obey the calls of my family and leave this desolate abode to spend the Christmas and New Year fêtes comfortably in Paris. After all, I don't much care for the idea of making merry in this deserted house, where my only partners under the mistletoe would be Chinamen. And I think window panes are essential to happiness. So I shall leave here tomorrow and return early in the New Year to carry on the work of redeeming the soil in our district.

Friday: 27*th.*

General Allenby writes:

"Your telegram congratulating me on the capture of Jerusalem was very pleasant to me. You are always kind and thoughtful, and I love to know that you are with me in spirit. I hope you received my telegram in reply thanking you. It was just forty days from the beginning of my campaign to the entry into Jerusalem. I entered Jerusalem myself on the 11th, accompanied by Colonel de Piépape, commanding the French Detachment, and Major Agostino, commanding the Italian Detachment. The inhabitants received us well, and all the dignitaries of the different Churches—Greek, Armenian, Coptic, Abyssinian, etc.—were presented to me. I had no idea there were so many varieties of the Christian religion!"

Tuesday: 31*st.*

This evening, as Felix and I watch the Old Year out, he tells me that he is ending his diary for 1918 with the words: "The war is ended. To my dear uniform—Adieu!"

My last words, written under the same circumstances, are: "To my dear British Army, which throughout four cruel years was to me as my own family—Adieu!"

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VERSAILLES

JULY, 1919.

I AWAIT here at Versailles the visit of General Birdwood, who tomorrow makes his entry into Paris with Field-Marshal Haig.

General Birdwood is bringing me, from H.M. the King of England, the Cross of Commander of the British Empire—an honour which is indeed unexpected.

General Birdwood begged to give me my decoration *à la française*—that is, with the embrace. I accepted, and shall wear proudly all my life the modest-looking violet-coloured ribbon.

The 14th July was the day of the triumphal entry into Paris of the Allied victorious armies.

From six in the morning I was on the roof of the Automobile Club at the corner of the Place de la Concorde and the Rue Royale. One looked at the vast square and up the great stretch of the Champs Elysées, from whence the troops came, making a circuit of the Place before disappearing down the Rue Royale.

All the Allies passed in perfect order, the American soldiers so solid a square that they moved as if one man, instead of many.

The British group had at its head Field-Marshal Haig and his Staff, and among them I soon saw General Birdwood and several of my other friends.

They were looking up at the roof of the Automobile Club, in which they seemed particularly interested, and then, in perfect unison, they suddenly saluted with their sabres!

I could not restrain my tears at the honour done me, and my neighbours were nearly as much affected as I was when I explained the reason of this *geste*.

The French group passed with a finish that defied competition; General Gouraud on his white horse preceding the infantry, and, passing before the ranks of

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the badly wounded massed opposite the Rue Royale, he, himself mutilated, saluted his comrades!

Our *diables bleus* (*Chasseurs à pied*) made a sensation; so alert and quick was their march past that there was quite a gap between them and the next section of the Allied Armies.

No, I can never believe that any efforts of the vanquished (which they will assuredly make) can ever destroy these ties of friendship—and it could only be young and succeeding generations that knew not the Great War who could remain indifferent to the fate of all or any of the Allies.

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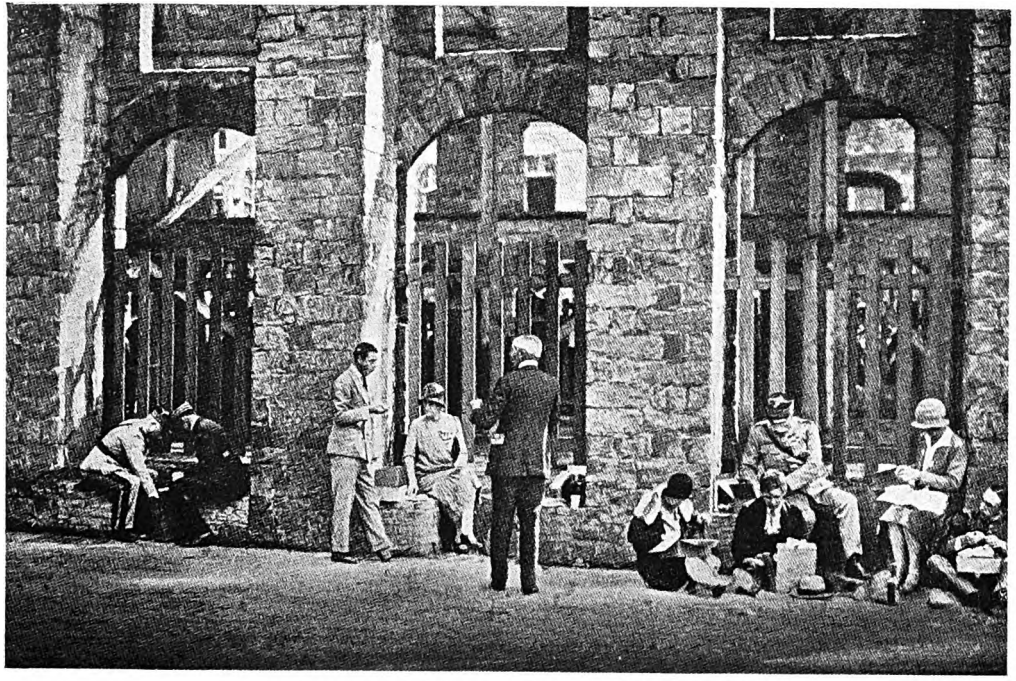

YPRES, WEDNESDAY, 8TH AUGUST, 1928

From left to right: Marshall Pétain, General Weygand, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, The Baroness Ernest de La Grange, General Trotter, Mrs. Crosfield, General Anthoine, etc.

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CONCLUSION

GRADUALLY they left France to return to their homes, both officers and men. All those called from the extremities of the immense British Empire to serve under the English flag were gone again. But a glorious vanguard stayed behind. And the heroes who composed it will stay for ever, lying in their last sleep amidst the fertile plains of Picardy, Flanders, and the Somme. More than 900,000 graves, for the greater part in France, raise their white headstones along the line which was the British front. They are the strongest guarantors of the *Entente Cordiale*. The British people, so long as they remember their dead, will never allow any enemy foot to desecrate this sacred soil. Even when the generations who experienced this war—mothers, widows, orphans—have disappeared, the old tradition of honour will live on, to remind those who come after of the supreme sacrifices of 1914-1918.

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Letter to Author from Le Marechal Foch, 1927

5.3.27

Le Marechal Foch

Madame,

Vous qui avez si généreusement
reçu les G.G. Britanniques,
dans votre château de la
Forêt de Compe, et qui avez pu
apprécier la valeur de leurs com
battants, vous avez parfaite-
ment raison d'aller dans vos
conférences, faire revivre les
sentiments qui au cours de la
Grande Guerre animaient tous

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les Alliés, et les femmes de leurs nations. Y a-t-il un plus bel exemple que celui de Louise de Bettignies qui a tant travaillé pour la cause commune ? Veut à ta mémoire.

Veuillez agréer, Madame, avec mes sincères encouragements, l'expression de mes plus respectueux hommages

L. Loth

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LETTER WRITTEN BY FIELD-MARSHAL LORD HAIG THE DAY BEFORE HIS DEATH, 26TH JANUARY, 1928

BEMERSYDE
ST BOSWELLS
SCOTLAND

26th Jan. 1928.

Dear Baroness de la Grange,

I feel I must send you a few lines of very grateful thanks for your charming letter, urging me to accept the invitation of the British Chamber of Commerce to their annual dinner which took place, I think, last night.

I have so many engagements at this time of year that I dare not venture to accept. Besides at this season, the journey from Scotland to Paris is sometimes most uncomfortable

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and so, my dear (hierarchical!)
Mother, I hope you will
forgive me for not
hearkening to your voice!
And wishing you everything
that is good for 1928

Believe me
Yours Very Sincerely
Craig. Th.

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